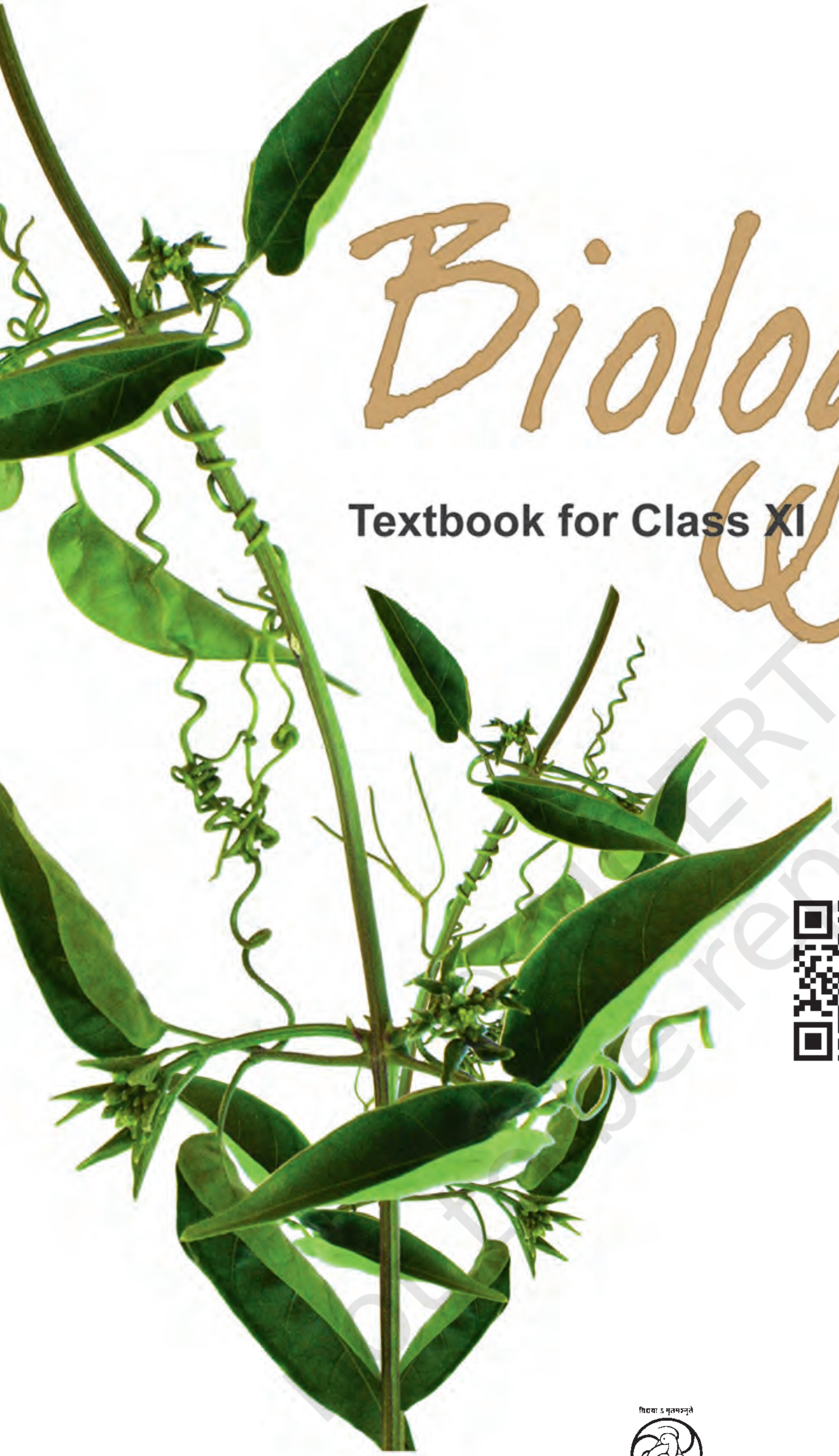

Biology

Textbook for Class XI

11080

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FOREWORD

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005, recommends that children's life at school must be linked to their life outside the school. This principle marks a departure from the legacy of bookish learning which continues to shape our system and causes a gap between the school, home and community. The syllabi and textbooks developed on the basis of NCF signify an attempt to implement this basic idea. They also attempt to discourage rote learning and the maintenance of sharp boundaries between different subject areas. We hope these measures will take us significantly further in the direction of a child-centred system of education outlined in the National Policy on Education (1986).

The success of this effort depends on the steps that school principals and teachers will take to encourage children to reflect on their own learning and to pursue imaginative activities and questions. We must recognise that, given space, time and freedom, children generate new knowledge by engaging with the information passed on to them by adults. Treating the prescribed textbook as the sole basis of examination is one of the key reasons why other resources and sites of learning are ignored. Inculcating creativity and initiative is possible if we perceive and treat children as participants in learning, not as receivers of a fixed body of knowledge.

These aims imply considerable change in school routines and mode of functioning. Flexibility in the daily time-table is as necessary as rigour in implementing the annual calendar so that the required number of teaching days are actually devoted to teaching. The methods used for teaching and evaluation will also determine how effective this textbook proves for making children's life at school a happy experience, rather than a source of stress or boredom. Syllabus designers have tried to address the problem of curricular burden by restructuring and reorienting knowledge at different stages with greater consideration for child psychology and the time available for teaching. The textbook attempts to enhance this endeavour by giving higher priority and space to opportunities for contemplation and wondering, discussion in small groups, and activities requiring hands-on experience.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) appreciates the hard work done by the textbook development committee responsible for this book. We wish to thank the Chairperson of the advisory group in science and mathematics, Professor J.V. Narlikar and the Chief Advisor for this book, Professor K. Muralidhar, Department of Zoology, University of Delhi, Delhi for guiding the work of this committee.

Several teachers contributed to the development of this textbook. We are grateful to their principals for making this possible. We are indebted to the institutions and organisations which have generously permitted us to draw upon their resources, material and personnel. We are especially grateful to the members of the National Monitoring Committee, appointed by the Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development under the Chairpersonship of Professor Mrinal Miri and Professor G.P. Deshpande, for their valuable time and contribution.

As an organisation committed to systemic reform and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, NCERT welcomes comments and suggestions which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinement.

Director
National Council of Educational
Research and Training

New Delhi
20 December 2005

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RATIONALISATION OF CONTENT IN THE TEXTBOOK

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative to reduce content load on students. The National Education Policy 2020, also emphasises reducing the content load and providing opportunities for experiential learning with creative mindset. In this background, the NCERT has undertaken the exercise to rationalise the textbooks across all classes. Learning Outcomes already developed by the NCERT across classes have been taken into consideration in this exercise.

Contents of the textbooks have been rationalised in view of the following:

- Overlapping with similar content included in other subject areas in the same class
- Similar content included in the lower or higher class in the same subject
- Difficulty level
- Content, which is easily accessible to students without much interventions from teachers and can be learned by children through self-learning or peer-learning
- Content, which is irrelevant in the present context

This present edition, is a reformatted version after carrying out the changes given above.

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THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a [1]**[SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC]** and to secure to all its citizens :

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the [2][unity and integrity of the Nation];

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949 do **HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.**

---

[1] Subs. by the Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976, Sec.2, for "Sovereign Democratic Republic" (w.e.f. 3.1.1977)

[2] Subs. by the Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976, Sec.2, for "Unity of the Nation" (w.e.f. 3.1.1977)

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A NOTE FOR THE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Biology is the science of life. It is the story of life on earth. It is the science of life forms and living processes. Biological systems, often appear to challenge physical laws that govern the behaviour of matter and energy in our world. Historically, biological knowledge was ancillary to knowledge of human body and its function. The latter as we know, is the basis of medical practice. However, parts of biological knowledge developed independent of human application. Fundamental questions about origin of life, the origin and growth of biodiversity, the evolution of flora and fauna of different habitats, etc., caught the imagination of biologists.

The very description of living organisms, be it from morphological perspective, physiological perspective, taxonomical perspective, etc., engaged scientists to such an extent that for sheer convenience, if not for anything else, the subject matter got artificially divided into the sub-disciplines of botany and zoology and later into even microbiology. Meanwhile, physical sciences made heavy inroads into biology, and established biochemistry and biophysics as new sub-disciplines of biology. Mendel's work and its rediscovery in the early twentieth century led to the promotion of study of genetics. The discovery of the double-helical structure of DNA and the deciphering of three dimensional structures of many macromolecules led to the establishment of and phenomenal growth in the dominating area of molecular biology. In a sense, functional disciplines laying emphasis on mechanisms underlying living processes, received more attention, support, intellectual and social recognition. Biology, unfortunately, got divided into classical and modern biology. To the majority of practising biologists, pursuit of biological research became more empirical rather than a curiosity and hypothesis driven intellectual exercise as is the case with theoretical physics, experimental physics, structural chemistry and material science. Fortunately and quietly, general unifying principles of biology were also being discovered, rediscovered and emphasised. The work of Mayr, Dobhzhansky, Haldane, Perutz, Khorana, Morgan, Darlington, Fisher and many others brought respect and seriousness to both classical and molecular biological disciplines. Ecology and Systems biology got established as unifying biological disciplines. Every area of biology began developing interface with not only other areas of biology but also other disciplines of science and mathematics. Pretty soon, the boundaries became porous. They are now on the verge of disappearing altogether. Progress in human biology, biomedical sciences, especially the structure, functioning and evolution of human brain brought in respect, awe and philosophical insights to biology. Biology even stepped out of laboratories, museums and natural parks and raised social, economic and cultural issues capturing the imagination of general public and hence political attention. Educationists did not lag behind and realised that biology should be taught as an interdisciplinary and integrating science at all stages of educational training especially at school and undergraduate levels. A new synthesis of all areas of basic and applied areas of biology is the need of the hour. Biology has come of age. It has an independent set of concepts which are universal just like physics and chemistry and mathematics.

The present volume is the first time presentation of the integrated biology for the school level children. One of the lacunae in biology teaching and study is the absence of integration with other disciplinary knowledge of physics, chemistry etc. Further many processes in plants, animals and microbes are similar when looked from physico-chemical perspective. Cell biology has brought out the unifying common cellular level activities underlying apparently diverse phenomena across plants, animals and microbes. Similarly, molecular science (e.g. biochemistry or molecular biology) has revealed the similar molecular mechanisms in all these apparently diverse organisms like plants, animals and microbes. Phenomena like respiration, metabolism, energy utlisation, growth, reproduction and development can be discussed in a unifying manner rather than as separate unrelated processes in plants and animals. An attempt has been made to unify such diverse disciplines in the book. The integration achieved however, is partial and not complete. Hopefully along with changes in the teaching and learning context, to be brought out in the next few years, the next edition of this book will reveal more integration of botany, zoology and microbiology and truly reflect the true nature of biology – the future science of man by man and for man.

This new textbook of Biology for class XI is a completely rewritten book in view of the syllabus revision and restructuring. It is also in accordance with the spirit of the National Curriculum Framework (2005) guidelines. The subject matter is presented under twenty-two chapters which are grouped under five thematic units. Each unit has a brief write up preceding the unit highlighting the essence of the chapters to follow under that unit. Each unit also has a biographical sketch of a prominent scientist in that area. Each chapter has, on the first page, a detailed table of contents giving sub-headings within the chapter. Decimal system using arabic numerals has been employed to indicate these sub-headings. At the end of each chapter a brief summary is provided. This brings to the notice of the student, what she/he is supposed to have learnt by studying the chapter. A set of questions is also provided at the conclusion of each chapter. These questions are essentially to enable the student to test herself/himself as to how much she/he has understood the subject matter. There are questions which are purely of information recall type; there are questions which need analytical thinking to answer and hence test true understanding; there are questions which are problems to solve and finally there are questions which need analysis and speculation as there is no one to answer to such questions. This tests the critical understanding of the subject matter in the mind of the student.

Special emphasis has been given on the narrative style, illustrations, activity exercises, clarity of expression, coverage of topics within the available time in school. A large number of extremely talented and dedicated people including practising teachers helped in bringing out this beautiful book. Our main purpose was to make sure that school level biology is not a burden for students and teachers. We sincerely wish that teaching biology and learning biology would become an enjoyable activity.

PROFESSOR K. Muralidhar
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University of Delhi

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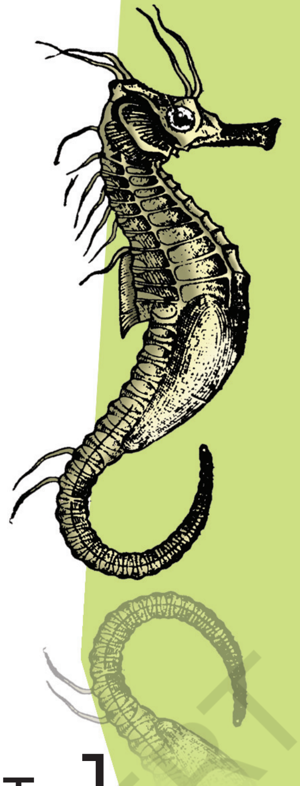

UNIT 1

DIVERSITY IN THE LIVING WORLD

Chapter 1
The Living World

Chapter 2
Biological Classification

Chapter 3
Plant Kingdom

Chapter 4
Animal Kingdom

Biology is the science of life forms and living processes. The living world comprises an amazing diversity of living organisms. Early man could easily perceive the difference between inanimate matter and living organisms. Early man deified some of the inanimate matter (wind, sea, fire etc.) and some among the animals and plants. A common feature of all such forms of inanimate and animate objects was the sense of awe or fear that they evoked. The description of living organisms including human beings began much later in human history. Societies which indulged in anthropocentric view of biology could register limited progress in biological knowledge. Systematic and monumental description of life forms brought in, out of necessity, detailed systems of identification, nomenclature and classification. The biggest spin off of such studies was the recognition of the sharing of similarities among living organisms both horizontally and vertically. That all present day living organisms are related to each other and also to all organisms that ever lived on this earth, was a revelation which humbled man and led to cultural movements for conservation of biodiversity. In the following chapters of this unit, you will get a description, including classification, of animals and plants from a taxonomist's perspective.

Ernst Mayr
(1904 – 2004)

Born on 5 July 1904, in Kempten, Germany, ERNST MAYR, the Harvard University evolutionary biologist who has been called 'The Darwin of the 20th century', was one of the 100 greatest scientists of all time. Mayr joined Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences in 1953 and retired in 1975, assuming the title *Alexander Agassiz Professor of Zoology Emeritus*. Throughout his nearly 80-year career, his research spanned ornithology, taxonomy, zoogeography, evolution, systematics, and the history and philosophy of biology. He almost single-handedly made the origin of species diversity the central question of evolutionary biology that it is today. He also pioneered the currently accepted definition of a biological species. Mayr was awarded the three prizes widely regarded as the *triple crown* of biology: the *Balzan Prize* in 1983, the *International Prize for Biology* in 1994, and the *Crafoord Prize* in 1999. Mayr died at the age of 100 in the year 2004.

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CHAPTER 1

THE LIVING WORLD

1.1 Diversity in the Living World

1.2 Taxonomic Categories

How wonderful is the living world! The wide range of living types is amazing. The extraordinary habitats in which we find living organisms, be it cold mountains, deciduous forests, oceans, fresh water lakes, deserts or hot springs, leave us speechless. The beauty of a galloping horse, of the migrating birds, the valley of flowers or the attacking shark evokes awe and a deep sense of wonder. The ecological conflict and cooperation among members of a population and among populations of a community or even the molecular traffic inside a cell make us deeply reflect on – what indeed is life? This question has two implicit questions within it. The first is a technical one and seeks answer to what living is as opposed to the non-living, and the second is a philosophical one, and seeks answer to what the purpose of life is. As scientists, we shall not attempt answering the second question. We will try to reflect on – what is living?

1.1 DIVERSITY IN THE LIVING WORLD

If you look around you will see a large variety of living organisms, be it potted plants, insects, birds, your pets or other animals and plants. There are also several organisms that you cannot see with your naked eye but they are all around you. If you were to increase the area that you make observations in, the range and variety of organisms that you see would increase. Obviously, if you were to visit a dense forest, you would probably see a much greater number and kinds of living organisms in it. Each different kind of plant, animal or organism that you see, represents a species. The number of species that are known and described range between 1.7-1.8 million. This refers to **biodiversity** or the number and types of organisms present on earth. We should remember here that as we explore new areas, and even old ones, new organisms are continuously being identified.

As stated earlier, there are millions of plants and animals in the world; we know the plants and animals in our own area by their local names. These local names would vary from place to place, even within a country. Probably you would recognise the confusion that would be created if we did not find ways and means to talk to each other, to refer to organisms we are talking about.

Hence, there is a need to standardise the naming of living organisms such that a particular organism is known by the same name all over the world. This process is called **nomenclature**. Obviously, nomenclature or naming is only possible when the organism is described correctly and we know to what organism the name is attached to. This is **identification.**

In order to facilitate the study, number of scientists have established procedures to assign a scientific name to each known organism. This is acceptable to biologists all over the world. For plants, scientific names are based on agreed principles and criteria, which are provided in International Code for Botanical Nomenclature (ICBN). You may ask, how are animals named? Animal taxonomists have evolved International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN). The scientific names ensure that each organism has only one name. Description of any organism should enable the people (in any part of the world) to arrive at the same name. They also ensure that such a name has not been used for any other known organism.

Biologists follow universally accepted principles to provide scientific names to known organisms. Each name has two components – the **Generic name** and the **specific epithet**. This system of providing a name with two components is called **Binomial nomenclature**. This naming system given by Carolus Linnaeus is being practised by biologists all over the world. This naming system using a two word format was found convenient. Let us take the example of mango to understand the way of providing scientific names better. The scientific name of mango is written as *Mangifera indica*. Let us see how it is a binomial name. In this name *Mangifera* represents the genus while *indica,* is a particular species, or a specific epithet. Other universal rules of nomenclature are as follows:

1. Biological names are generally in Latin and written in italics. They are Latinised or derived from Latin irrespective of their origin.
2. The first word in a biological name represents the genus while the second component denotes the specific epithet.
3. Both the words in a biological name, when handwritten, are separately underlined, or printed in italics to indicate their Latin origin.

4. The first word denoting the genus starts with a capital letter while the specific epithet starts with a small letter. It can be illustrated with the example of *Mangifera indica.*

Name of the author appears after the specific epithet, i.e., at the end of the biological name and is written in an abbreviated form, e.g., *Mangifera indica* Linn. It indicates that this species was first described by Linnaeus.

Since it is nearly impossible to study all the living organisms, it is necessary to devise some means to make this possible. This process is **classification**. Classification is the process by which anything is grouped into convenient categories based on some easily observable characters. For example, we easily recognise groups such as plants or animals or dogs, cats or insects. The moment we use any of these terms, we associate certain characters with the organism in that group. What image do you see when you think of a dog ? Obviously, each one of us will see 'dogs' and not 'cats'. Now, if we were to think of 'Alsatians' we know what we are talking about. Similarly, suppose we were to say 'mammals', you would, of course, think of animals with external ears and body hair. Likewise, in plants, if we try to talk of 'Wheat', the picture in each of our minds will be of wheat plants, not of rice or any other plant. Hence, all these - 'Dogs', 'Cats', 'Mammals', 'Wheat', 'Rice', 'Plants', 'Animals', etc., are convenient categories we use to study organisms. The scientific term for these categories is **taxa**. Here you must recognise that taxa can indicate categories at very different levels. 'Plants' – also form a taxa. 'Wheat' is also a taxa. Similarly, 'animals', 'mammals', 'dogs' are all taxa – but you know that a dog is a mammal and mammals are animals. Therefore, 'animals', 'mammals' and 'dogs' represent taxa at different levels.

Hence, based on characteristics, all living organisms can be classified into different taxa. This process of classification is **taxonomy**. External and internal structure, along with the structure of cell, development process and ecological information of organisms are essential and form the basis of modern taxonomic studies.

Hence, characterisation, identification, classification and nomenclature are the processes that are basic to taxonomy.

Taxonomy is not something new. Human beings have always been interested in knowing more and more about the various kinds of organisms, particularly with reference to their own use. In early days, human beings needed to find sources for their basic needs of food, clothing and shelter. Hence, the earliest classifications were based on the 'uses' of various organisms.

Human beings were, since long, not only interested in knowing more about different kinds of organisms and their diversities, but also the relationships among them. This branch of study was referred to as **systematics**. The word systematics is derived from the Latin word 'systema' which means systematic arrangement of organisms. Linnaeus used *Systema Naturae* as the title of his publication. The scope of systematics was later enlarged to include identification, nomenclature and classification. Systematics takes into account evolutionary relationships between organisms.

1.2 TAXONOMIC CATEGORIES

Classification is not a single step process but involves hierarchy of steps in which each step represents a rank or category. Since the category is a part of overall taxonomic arrangement, it is called the **taxonomic category** and all categories together constitute the **taxonomic hierarchy**. Each category, referred to as a unit of classification, in fact, represents a rank and is commonly termed as **taxon** (pl.: taxa).

Taxonomic categories and hierarchy can be illustrated by an example. Insects represent a group of organisms sharing common features like three pairs of jointed legs. It means insects are recognisable concrete objects which can be classified, and thus were given a rank or category. Can you name other such groups of organisms? Remember, groups represent category. Category further denotes rank. Each rank or *taxon*, in fact, represents a unit of classification. These taxonomic groups/ categories are distinct biological entities and not merely morphological aggregates.

Taxonomical studies of all known organisms have led to the development of common categories such as kingdom, phylum or division (for plants), class, order, family, genus and species. All organisms, including those in the plant and animal kingdoms have species as the lowest category. Now the question you may ask is, how to place an organism in various categories? The basic requirement is the knowledge of characters of an individual or group of organisms. This helps in identifying similarities and dissimilarities among the individuals of the same kind of organisms as well as of other kinds of organisms.

1.2.1 Species

Taxonomic studies consider a group of individual organisms with fundamental similarities as a **species**. One should be able to distinguish one species from the other closely related species based on the distinct morphological differences. Let us consider *Mangifera indica*, *Solanum tuberosum* (potato) and *Panthera leo* (lion). All the three names, *indica, tuberosum* and *leo,* represent the specific epithets, while the first words *Mangifera, Solanum* and *Panthera* are genera and represents another higher level of taxon or category. Each genus may have one or more than one specific epithets representing different organisms, but having morphological similarities. For example, *Panthera* has another specific epithet called *tigris* and *Solanum* includes species like *nigrum* and *melongena*. Human beings belong to the species *sapiens* which is grouped in the genus *Homo*. The scientific name thus, for human being, is written as *Homo sapiens*.

1.2.2 Genus

Genus comprises a group of related species which has more characters in common in comparison to species of other genera. We can say that genera are aggregates of closely related species. For example, potato and brinjal are two different species but both belong to the genus *Solanum.* Lion (*Panthera leo*), leopard (*P. pardus*) and tiger (*P. tigris*) with several common features, are all species of the genus *Panthera.* This genus differs from another genus *Felis* which includes cats.

1.2.3 Family

The next category, **Family**, has a group of related genera with still less number of similarities as compared to genus and species. Families are characterised on the basis of both vegetative and reproductive features of plant species. Among plants for example, three different genera *Solanum*, *Petunia* and *Datura* are placed in the family Solanaceae. Among animals for example, genus *Panthera*, comprising lion, tiger, leopard is put along with genus, *Felis* (cats) in the family Felidae. Similarly, if you observe the features of a cat and a dog, you will find some similarities and some differences as well. They are separated into two different families – Felidae and Canidae, respectively.

1.2.4 Order

You have seen earlier that categories like species, genus and families are based on a number of similar characters. Generally, order and other higher taxonomic categories are identified based on the aggregates of characters. Order being a higher category, is the assemblage of families which exhibit a few similar characters. The similar characters are less in number as compared to different genera included in a family. Plant families like Convolvulaceae, Solanaceae are included in the order Polymoniales mainly based on the floral characters. The animal order, Carnivora, includes families like Felidae and Canidae.

1.2.5 Class

This category includes related orders. For example, order Primata comprising monkey, gorilla and gibbon is placed in class Mammalia along with order Carnivora that includes animals like tiger, cat and dog. Class Mammalia has other orders also.

1.2.6 Phylum

Classes comprising animals like fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds along with mammals constitute the next higher category called Phylum. All these, based on the common features like presence of notochord and dorsal hollow neural system, are included in phylum Chordata. In case of plants, classes with a few similar characters are assigned to a higher category called Division.

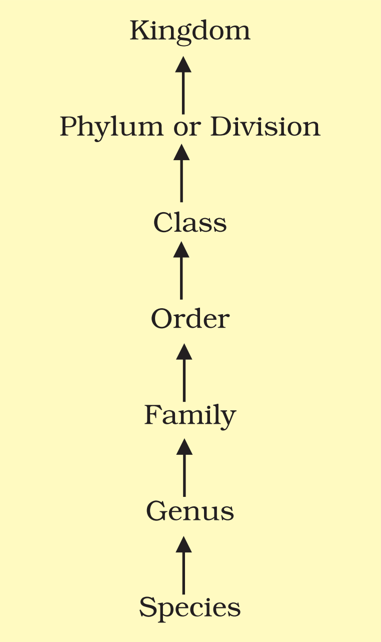

Figure 1.1 Taxonomic categories showing hierarchial arrangement in ascending order

1.2.7 Kingdom

All animals belonging to various phyla are assigned to the highest category called Kingdom Animalia in the classification system of animals. The Kingdom Plantae, on the other hand, is distinct, and comprises all plants from various divisions. Henceforth, we will refer to these two groups as animal and plant kingdoms.

The taxonomic categories from species to kingdom have been shown in ascending order starting with species in Figure 1.1. These are broad categories. However, taxonomists have also developed sub-categories in this hierarchy to facilitate more sound and scientific placement of various taxa.

Look at the hierarchy in Figure 1.1. Can you recall the basis of arrangement? Say, for example, as we go higher from species to kingdom, the number of common characteristics goes on decreasing. Lower the taxa, more are the characteristics that the members within the taxon share. Higher the category, greater is the difficulty of determining the relationship to other taxa at the same level. Hence, the problem of classification becomes more complex.

Table 1.1 indicates the taxonomic categories to which some common organisms like housefly, man, mango and wheat belong.

TABLE 1.1 Organisms with their Taxonomic Categories

Common Name	**Biological Name**	**Genus**	**Family**	**Order**	**Class**	**Phylum/ Division**
Man	*Homo sapiens*	*Homo*	Hominidae	Primata	Mammalia	Chordata
Housefly	*Musca domestica*	*Musca*	Muscidae	Diptera	Insecta	Arthropoda
Mango	*Mangifera indica*	*Mangifera*	Anacardiaceae	Sapindales	Dicotyledonae	Angiospermae
Wheat	*Triticum aestivum*	*Triticum*	Poaceae	Poales	Monocotyledonae	Angiospermae

SUMMARY

The living world is rich in variety. Millions of plants and animals have been identified and described but a large number still remains unknown. The very range of organisms in terms of size, colour, habitat, physiological and morphological features make us seek the defining characteristics of living organisms. In order to facilitate the study of kinds and diversity of organisms, biologists have evolved certain rules and principles for identification, nomenclature and classification of organisms. The branch of knowledge dealing with these aspects is referred to as taxonomy. The taxonomic studies of various species of plants and animals are useful in agriculture, forestry, industry and in general for knowing our bio-resources and their diversity. The basics of taxonomy like identification, naming and classification of organisms are universally evolved under international codes. Based on the resemblances and distinct differences, each organism is identified and assigned a correct scientific/biological name comprising two words as per the binomial system of nomenclature. An organism represents/occupies a place or position in the system of classification. There are many categories/ ranks which are generally referred to as taxonomic categories or taxa. All the categories constitute a taxonomic hierarchy.

EXERCISES

1. Why are living organisms classified?
2. Why are the classification systems changing every now and then?
3. What different criteria would you choose to classify people that you meet often?
4. What do we learn from identification of individuals and populations?
5. Given below is the scientific name of Mango. Identify the correctly written name.

   Mangifera Indica
   Mangifera indica
6. Define a taxon. Give some examples of taxa at different hierarchical levels.
7. Can you identify the correct sequence of taxonomical categories?

   (a) Species → Order → Phylum → Kingdom
   (b) Genus → Species → Order → Kingdom
   (c) Species → Genus → Order → Phylum
8. Try to collect all the currently accepted meanings for the word ‘species’. Discuss with your teacher the meaning of species in case of higher plants and animals on one hand, and bacteria on the other hand.
9. Define and understand the following terms:

   (i) Phylum (ii) Class (iii) Family (iv) Order (v) Genus
10. Illustrate the taxonomical hierarchy with suitable examples of a plant and an animal.

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CHAPTER 2

BIOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION

2.1 Kingdom Monera

2.2 Kingdom Protista

2.3 Kingdom Fungi

2.4 Kingdom Plantae

2.5 Kingdom Animalia

2.6 Viruses, Viroids and Lichens

Since the dawn of civilisation, there have been many attempts to classify living organisms. It was done instinctively not using criteria that were scientific but borne out of a need to use organisms for our own use – for food, shelter and clothing. Aristotle was the earliest to attempt a more scientific basis for classification. He used simple morphological characters to classify plants into trees, shrubs and herbs. He also divided animals into two groups, those which had red blood and those that did not.

In Linnaeus' time a **Two Kingdom** system of classification with **Plantae** and **Animalia** kingdoms was developed that included all plants and animals respectively. This system did not distinguish between the eukaryotes and prokaryotes, unicellular and multicellular organisms and photosynthetic (green algae) and non-photosynthetic (fungi) organisms. Classification of organisms into plants and animals was easily done and was easy to understand, but, a large number of organisms did not fall into either category. Hence the two kingdom classification used for a long time was found inadequate. Besides, gross morphology a need was also felt for including other characteristics like cell structure, nature of wall, mode of nutrition, habitat, methods of reproduction, evolutionary relationships, etc. Classification systems for the living organisms have hence, undergone several changes over the time. Though plant and animal kingdoms have been a constant under all different systems, the understanding of what groups/organisms be included under these kingdoms have been changing; the number and nature of other kingdoms have also been understood differently by different scientists over the time.

TABLE 2.1 Characteristics of the Five Kingdoms

Characters	Five Kingdoms				
	Monera	**Protista**	**Fungi**	**Plantae**	**Animalia**
Cell type	Prokaryotic	Eukaryotic	Eukaryotic	Eukaryotic	Eukaryotic
Cell wall	Noncellulosic (Polysaccharide + amino acid)	Present in some	Present with chitin	Present (cellulose)	Absent
Nuclear membrane	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present
Body organisation	Cellular	Cellular	Multiceullar/ loose tissue	Tissue/ organ	Tissue/organ/ organ system
Mode of nutrition	Autotrophic (chemosynthetic and photosynthetic) and Heterotrophic (saprophytic/parasitic)	Autotrophic (Photosynthetic) and Heterotrophic	Heterotrophic (Saprophytic/ Parasitic)	Autotrophic (Photosynthetic)	Heterotrophic (Holozoic/ Saprophytic etc.)

R.H. Whittaker (1969) proposed a **Five Kingdom Classification.** The kingdoms defined by him were named **Monera, Protista, Fungi, Plantae** and **Animalia.** The main criteria for classification used by him include cell structure, body organisation, mode of nutrition, reproduction and phylogenetic relationships. Table 2.1 gives a comparative account of different characteristics of the five kingdoms.

The three-domain system has also been proposed that divides the Kingdom Monera into two domains, leaving the remaining eukaryotic kingdoms in the third domain and thereby a six kingdom classification. You will learn about this system in detail in higher classes.

Let us look at this five kingdom classification to understand the issues and considerations that influenced the classification system. Earlier classification systems included bacteria, blue green algae, fungi, mosses, ferns, gymnosperms and the angiosperms under 'Plants'. The character that unified this whole kingdom was that all the organisms included had a cell wall in their cells. This placed together groups which widely differed in other characteristics. It brought together the prokaryotic bacteria and the blue green algae (cyanobacteria) with other groups which were eukaryotic. It also grouped together the unicellular organisms and the multicellular ones, say, for example, *Chlamydomonas* and *Spirogyra* were placed together under algae. The classification did not differentiate between the heterotrophic group – fungi, and the autotrophic green plants, though they also showed a characteristic difference in their walls composition – the fungi had chitin in their walls while the green plants had a cellulosic cell wall. When such characteristics were considered, the fungi were placed in a separate kingdom – Kingdom Fungi. All prokaryotic organisms were grouped together under Kingdom Monera and the unicellular eukaryotic organisms were placed in Kingdom Protista. Kingdom Protista has brought together *Chlamydomonas*, *Chlorella* (earlier placed in Algae within Plants and both having cell walls) with *Paramoecium* and *Amoeba* (which were earlier placed in the animal kingdom which lack cell wall). It has put together organisms which, in earlier classifications, were placed in different kingdoms. This happened because the criteria for classification changed. This kind of changes will take place in future too depending on the improvement in our understanding of characteristics and evolutionary relationships. Over time, an attempt has been made to evolve a classification system which reflects not only the morphological, physiological and reproductive similarities, but is also phylogenetic, i.e., is based on evolutionary relationships.

In this chapter we will study characteristics of Kingdoms Monera, Protista and Fungi of the Whittaker system of classification. The Kingdoms Plantae and Animalia, commonly referred to as plant and animal kingdoms, respectively, will be dealt separately in chapters 3 and 4.

2.1 KINGDOM MONERA

Bacteria are the sole members of the Kingdom Monera. They are the most abundant micro-organisms. Bacteria occur almost everywhere. Hundreds of bacteria are present in a handful of soil. They also live in extreme habitats such as hot springs, deserts, snow and deep oceans where very few other life forms can survive. Many of them live in or on other organisms as parasites.

Bacteria are grouped under four categories based on their shape: the spherical Coccus (pl.: cocci), the rod-shaped Bacillus (pl.: bacilli), the comma-shaped Vibrium (pl.: vibrio) and the spiral Spirillum (pl.: spirilla) (Figure 2.1).

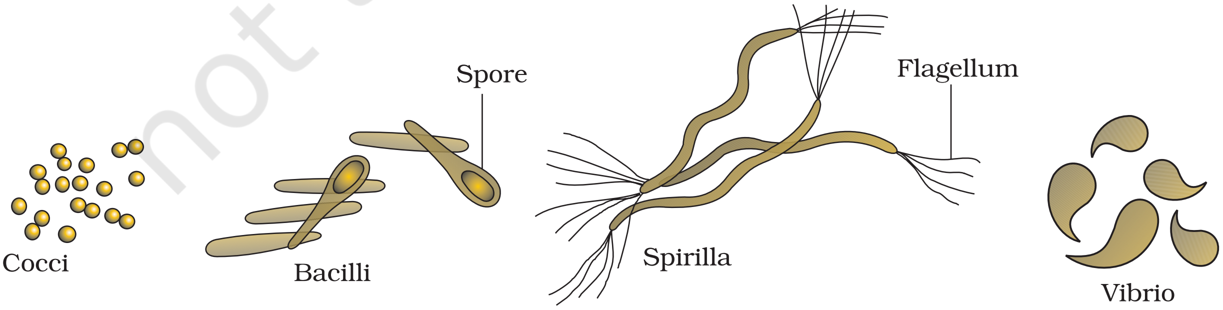

Figure 2.1 Bacteria of different shapes

Though the bacterial structure is very simple, they are very complex in behaviour. Compared to many other organisms, bacteria as a group show the most extensive metabolic diversity. Some of the bacteria are autotrophic, i.e., they synthesise their own food from inorganic substrates. They may be photosynthetic autotrophic or chemosynthetic autotrophic. The vast majority of bacteria are heterotrophs, i.e., they depend on other organisms or on dead organic matter for food.

2.1.1 Archaebacteria

These bacteria are special since they live in some of the most harsh habitats such as extreme salty areas (halophiles), hot springs (thermoacidophiles) and marshy areas (methanogens). Archaebacteria differ from other bacteria in having a different cell wall structure and this feature is responsible for their survival in extreme conditions. Methanogens are present in the gut of several ruminant animals such as cows and buffaloes and they are responsible for the production of methane (biogas) from the dung of these animals.

2.1.2 Eubacteria

There are thousands of different **eubacteria** or 'true bacteria'. They are characterised by the presence of a rigid cell wall, and if motile, a flagellum. The **cyanobacteria** (also referred to as blue-green algae) have chlorophyll *a* similar to green plants and are **photosynthetic autotrophs** (Figure 2.2). The cyanobacteria are unicellular, colonial or filamentous, freshwater/marine or terrestrial algae. The colonies are generally surrounded by gelatinous sheath. They often form blooms in polluted water bodies. Some of these organisms can fix atmospheric nitrogen in specialised cells called **heterocysts,** e.g., *Nostoc* and *Anabaena*. **Chemosynthetic autotrophic** bacteria oxidise various inorganic substances such as nitrates, nitrites and ammonia and use the released energy for their ATP production. They play a great role in recycling nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorous, iron and sulphur.

Heterotrophic bacteria are most abundant in nature. The majority are important decomposers. Many of them have a significant impact on human affairs. They are helpful in making curd from milk, production of antibiotics, fixing nitrogen in legume

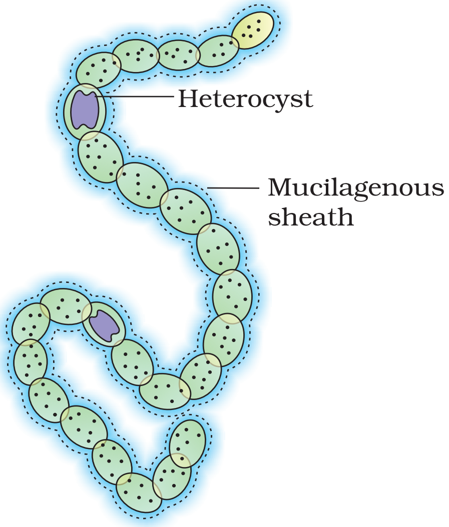

Figure 2.2 A filamentous blue-green algae – *Nostoc*

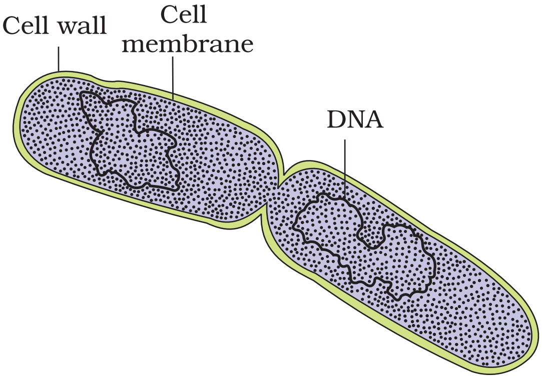

Figure 2.3 A dividing bacterium

roots, etc. Some are pathogens causing damage to human beings, crops, farm animals and pets. Cholera, typhoid, tetanus, citrus canker are well known diseases caused by different bacteria.

Bacteria reproduce mainly by fission (Figure 2.3). Sometimes, under unfavourable conditions, they produce spores. They also reproduce by a sort of sexual reproduction by adopting a primitive type of DNA transfer from one bacterium to the other.

The **Mycoplasma** are organisms that completely lack a cell wall. They are the smallest living cells known and can survive without oxygen. Many mycoplasma are pathogenic in animals and plants.

2.2 KINGDOM PROTISTA

All single-celled eukaryotes are placed under **Protista**, but the boundaries of this kingdom are not well defined. What may be 'a photosynthetic protistan' to one biologist may be 'a plant' to another. In this book we include Chrysophytes, Dinoflagellates, Euglenoids, Slime moulds and Protozoans under Protista. Members of Protista are primarily aquatic. This kingdom forms a link with the others dealing with plants, animals and fungi. Being eukaryotes, the protistan cell body contains a well defined nucleus and other membrane-bound organelles. Some have flagella or cilia. Protists reproduce asexually and sexually by a process involving cell fusion and zygote formation.

2.2.1 Chrysophytes

This group includes diatoms and golden algae (desmids). They are found in fresh water as well as in marine environments. They are microscopic and float passively in water currents (plankton). Most of them are photosynthetic. In diatoms the cell walls form two thin overlapping shells, which fit together as in a soap box. The walls are embedded with silica and thus the walls are indestructible. Thus, diatoms have left behind large amount of cell wall deposits in their habitat; this accumulation over billions of years is referred to as 'diatomaceous earth'. Being gritty this soil is used in polishing, filtration of oils and syrups. Diatoms are the chief 'producers' in the oceans.

2.2.2 Dinoflagellates

These organisms are mostly marine and photosynthetic. They appear yellow, green, brown, blue or red depending on the main pigments present in their cells. The cell wall has stiff cellulose plates on the outer surface. Most of them have two flagella; one lies longitudinally and the other transversely in a furrow between the wall plates. Very often, red dinoflagellates (Example: *Gonyaulax)* undergo such rapid multiplication that they make the sea appear red (red tides). Toxins released by such large numbers may even kill other marine animals such as fishes.

2.2.3 Euglenoids

Majority of them are fresh water organisms found in stagnant water. Instead of a cell wall, they have a protein rich layer called pellicle which makes their body flexible. They have two flagella, a short and a long one. Though they are photosynthetic in the presence of sunlight, when deprived of sunlight they behave like heterotrophs by predating on other smaller organisms. Interestingly, the pigments of euglenoids are identical to those present in higher plants. Example: *Euglena* (Figure 2.4b).

2.2.4 Slime Moulds

Slime moulds are saprophytic protists. The body moves along decaying twigs and leaves engulfing organic material. Under suitable conditions, they form an aggregation called plasmodium which may grow and spread over several feet. During unfavourable conditions, the plasmodium differentiates and forms fruiting bodies bearing spores at their tips. The spores possess true walls. They are extremely resistant and survive for many years, even under adverse conditions. The spores are dispersed by air currents.

2.2.5 Protozoans

All protozoans are heterotrophs and live as predators or parasites. They are believed to be primitive relatives of animals. There are four major groups of protozoans.

Amoeboid protozoans: These organisms live in fresh water, sea water or moist soil. They move and capture

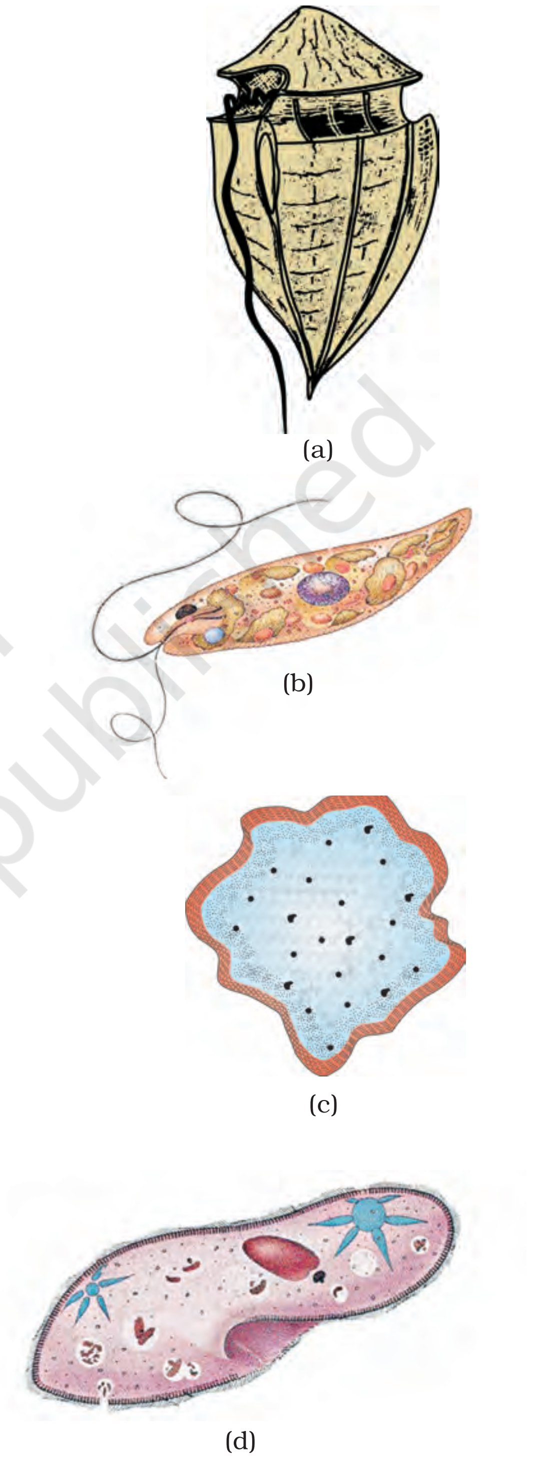

Figure 2.4 (a) *Dinoflagellates*
(b) *Euglena*
(c) *Slime mould*
(d) *Paramoecium*

their prey by putting out pseudopodia (false feet) as in *Amoeba.* Marine forms have silica shells on their surface. Some of them such as *Entamoeba* are parasites.

Flagellated protozoans: The members of this group are either free-living or parasitic. They have flagella. The parasitic forms cause diaseases such as sleeping sickness. Example: *Trypanosoma.*

Ciliated protozoans: These are aquatic, actively moving organisms because of the presence of thousands of cilia. They have a cavity (gullet) that opens to the outside of the cell surface. The coordinated movement of rows of cilia causes the water laden with food to be steered into the gullet. Example: *Paramoecium* (Figure 2.4d)*.*

Sporozoans: This includes diverse organisms that have an infectious spore-like stage in their life cycle. The most notorious is *Plasmodium* (malarial parasite) which causes malaria, a disease which has a staggering effect on human population.

2.3 KINGDOM FUNGI

The fungi constitute a unique kingdom of heterotrophic organisms. They show a great diversity in morphology and habitat. You must have seen fungi on a moist bread and rotten fruits. The common mushroom you eat and toadstools are also fungi. White spots seen on mustard leaves are due to a parasitic fungus. Some unicellular fungi, e.g., yeast are used to make bread and beer. Other fungi cause diseases in plants and animals; wheat rust-causing *Puccinia* is an important example. Some are the source of antibiotics, e.g., *Penicillium.* Fungi are cosmopolitan and occur in air, water, soil and on animals and plants. They prefer to grow in warm and humid places. Have you ever wondered why we keep food in the refrigerator ? Yes, it is to prevent food from going bad due to bacterial or fungal infections.

With the exception of yeasts which are unicellular, fungi are filamentous. Their bodies consist of long, slender thread-like structures called hyphae. The network of hyphae is known as mycelium. Some hyphae are continuous tubes filled with multinucleated cytoplasm – these are called coenocytic hyphae. Others have septae or cross walls in their hyphae. The cell walls of fungi are composed of chitin and polysaccharides.

Most fungi are heterotrophic and absorb soluble organic matter from dead substrates and hence are called **saprophytes**. Those that depend on living plants and animals are called **parasites**. They can also live as **symbionts** – in association with algae as **lichens** and with roots of higher plants as **mycorrhiza**.

Reproduction in fungi can take place by vegetative means – fragmentation, fission and budding. Asexual reproduction is by spores called conidia or sporangiospores or zoospores, and sexual reproduction is by oospores, ascospores and basidiospores. The various spores are produced in distinct structures called fruiting bodies. The sexual cycle involves the following three steps:

(i) Fusion of protoplasms between two motile or non-motile gametes called **plasmogamy.**

(ii) Fusion of two nuclei called **karyogamy.**

(iii) Meiosis in zygote resulting in haploid spores.

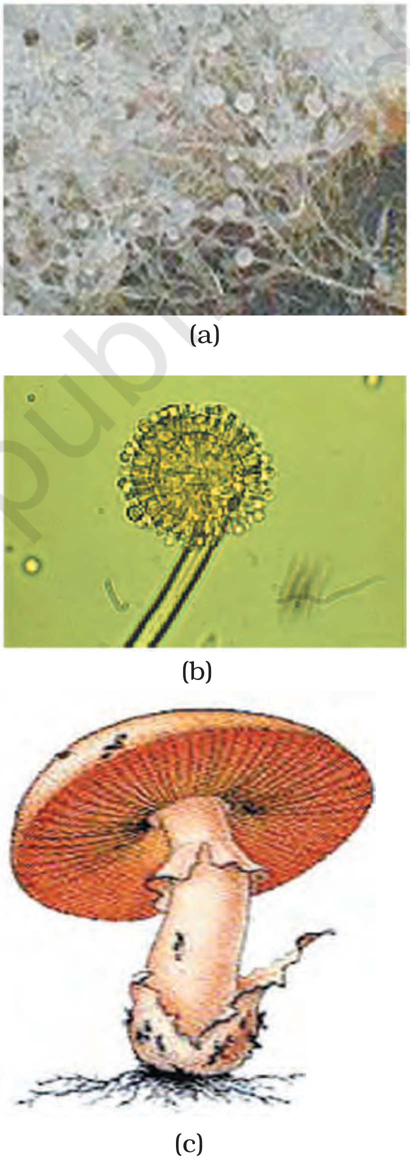
(a)
(b)
(c)

Figure 2.5 Fungi: (a) *Mucor* (b) *Aspergillus* (c) *Agaricus*

When a fungus reproduces sexually, two haploid hyphae of compatible mating types come together and fuse. In some fungi the fusion of two haploid cells immediately results in diploid cells (2n). However, in other fungi (ascomycetes and basidiomycetes), an intervening dikaryotic stage (n + n, i.e., two nuclei per cell) occurs; such a condition is called a **dikaryon** and the phase is called **dikaryophase** of fungus. Later, the parental nuclei fuse and the cells become diploid. The fungi form fruiting bodies in which reduction division occurs, leading to formation of haploid spores.

The morphology of the mycelium, mode of spore formation and fruiting bodies form the basis for the division of the kingdom into various classes.

2.3.1 Phycomycetes

Members of phycomycetes are found in aquatic habitats and on decaying wood in moist and damp places or as obligate parasites on plants. The mycelium is aseptate and coenocytic. Asexual reproduction takes place by zoospores (motile) or by aplanospores (non-motile). These spores are endogenously produced in sporangium. A zygospore is formed by fusion of two gametes. These gametes are similar in morphology (isogamous) or dissimilar (anisogamous or oogamous). Some common examples are *Mucor* (Figure 2.5a), *Rhizopus* (the bread mould mentioned earlier) and *Albugo* (the parasitic fungi on mustard).

2.3.2 Ascomycetes

Commonly known as sac-fungi, the ascomycetes are mostly multicellular, e.g., *Penicillium*, or rarely unicellular, e.g., yeast (*Saccharomyces*). They are saprophytic, decomposers, parasitic or coprophilous (growing on dung). Mycelium is branched and septate. The asexual spores are conidia produced exogenously on the special mycelium called conidiophores. Conidia on germination produce mycelium. Sexual spores are called ascospores which are produced endogenously in sac like asci (singular ascus). These asci are arranged in different types of fruiting bodies called ascocarps. Some examples are *Aspergillus* (Figure 2.5b)*, Claviceps* and *Neurospora. Neurospora* is used extensively in biochemical and genetic work. Many members like morels and truffles are edible and are considered delicacies.

2.3.3 Basidiomycetes

Commonly known forms of basidiomycetes are mushrooms, bracket fungi or puffballs. They grow in soil, on logs and tree stumps and in living plant bodies as parasites, e.g., rusts and smuts. The mycelium is branched and septate. The asexual spores are generally not found, but vegetative reproduction by fragmentation is common. The sex organs are absent, but plasmogamy is brought about by fusion of two vegetative or somatic cells of different strains or genotypes. The resultant structure is dikaryotic which ultimately gives rise to basidium. Karyogamy and meiosis take place in the basidium producing four basidiospores. The basidiospores are exogenously produced on the basidium (pl.: basidia). The basidia are arranged in fruiting bodies called basidiocarps. Some common members are *Agaricus* (mushroom) (Figure 2.5c)*, Ustilago* (smut) and *Puccinia* (rust fungus).

2.3.4 Deuteromycetes

Commonly known as imperfect fungi because only the asexual or vegetative phases of these fungi are known. When the sexual forms of these fungi were discovered they were moved into classes they rightly belong to. It is also possible that the asexual and vegetative stage have been given one name (and placed under deuteromycetes) and the sexual stage another (and placed under another class). Later when the linkages were established, the fungi were correctly identified and moved out of deuteromycetes. Once perfect (sexual) stages of members of dueteromycetes were discovered, they were often moved to ascomycetes and basidiomycetes. The deuteromycetes reproduce only by asexual spores known as conidia. The mycelium is septate and branched. Some members are saprophytes or parasites while a large number of them are decomposers of litter and help in mineral cycling. Some examples are *Alternaria, Colletotrichum* and *Trichoderma*.

2.4 KINGDOM PLANTAE

Kingdom Plantae includes all eukaryotic chlorophyll-containing organisms commonly called plants. A few members are partially heterotrophic such as the insectivorous plants or parasites. Bladderwort and Venus fly trap are examples of insectivorous plants and *Cuscuta* is a parasite. The plant cells have an eukaryotic structure with prominent chloroplasts and cell wall mainly made of cellulose. You will study the eukaryotic cell structure in detail in Chapter 8. Plantae includes algae, bryophytes, pteridophytes, gymnosperms and angiosperms.

Life cycle of plants has two distinct phases – the diploid sporophytic and the haploid gametophytic – that alternate with each other. The lengths of the haploid and diploid phases, and whether these phases are free–living or dependent on others, vary among different groups in plants. This phenomenon is called **alternation of generations.** You will study further details of this kingdom in Chapter 3.

2.5 KINGDOM ANIMALIA

This kingdom is characterised by heterotrophic eukaryotic organisms that are multicellular and their cells lack cell walls. They directly or indirectly depend on plants for food. They digest their food in an internal cavity and store food reserves as glycogen or fat. Their mode of nutrition is holozoic – by ingestion of food. They follow a definite growth pattern and grow into adults that have a definite shape and size. Higher forms show elaborate sensory and neuromotor mechanism. Most of them are capable of locomotion.

The sexual reproduction is by copulation of male and female followed by embryological development. Salient features of various phyla are described in Chapter 4.

2.6 VIRUSES, VIROIDS, PRIONS AND LICHENS

In the five kingdom classification of Whittaker there is no mention of lichens and some acellular organisms like viruses, viroids and prions. These are briefly introduced here.

All of us who have suffered the ill effects of common cold or 'flu' know what effects viruses can have on us, even if we do not associate it with our condition. Viruses did not find a place in classification since they are not considered truly 'living', if we understand living as those organisms that have a cell structure. The viruses are non-cellular organisms that are characterised by having an inert crystalline structure outside the living cell.

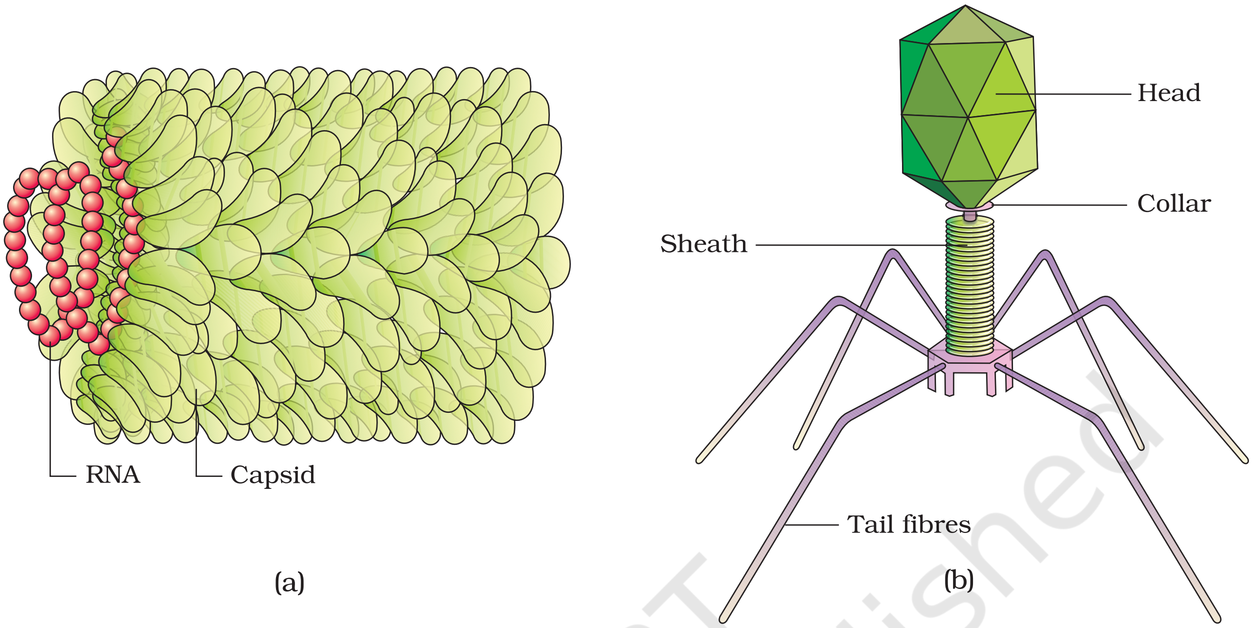

Figure 2.6 (a) Tobacco Mosaic Virus (TMV) (b) Bacteriophage

Once they infect a cell, they take over the machinery of the host cell to replicate themselves, killing the host. Would you call viruses living or non-living?

Virus means venom or poisonous fluid. Dmitri Ivanowsky (1892) recognised certain microbes as causal organism of the mosaic disease of tobacco (Figure 2.6a). These were found to be smaller than bacteria because they passed through bacteria-proof filters. M.W. Beijerinck (1898) demonstrated that the extract of the infected plants of tobacco could cause infection in healthy plants and named the new pathogen "virus" and called the fluid as *Contagium vivum fluidum* (infectious living fluid). W.M. Stanley (1935) showed that viruses could be crystallised and crystals consist largely of proteins. They are inert outside their specific host cell. Viruses are obligate parasites.

In addition to proteins, viruses also contain genetic material, that could be either RNA or DNA. No virus contains both RNA and DNA. A virus is a nucleoprotein and the genetic material is infectious. In general, viruses that infect plants have single stranded RNA and viruses that infect animals have either single or double stranded RNA or double stranded DNA. Bacterial viruses or bacteriophages (viruses that infect the bacteria) are usually double stranded DNA viruses (Figure 2.6b). The protein coat called capsid made of small subunits called capsomeres, protects the nucleic acid. These capsomeres are arranged in helical or polyhedral geometric forms. Viruses cause diseases like mumps, small pox, herpes and influenza. AIDS in humans is also caused by a virus. In plants, the symptoms can be mosaic formation, leaf rolling and curling, yellowing and vein clearing, dwarfing and stunted growth.

Viroids : In 1971, T.O. Diener discovered a new infectious agent that was smaller than viruses and caused potato spindle tuber disease. It was found to be a free RNA; it lacked the protein coat that is found in viruses, hence the name viroid. The RNA of the viroid was of low molecular weight.

Prions : In modern medicine certain infectious neurological diseases were found to be transmitted by an agent consisting of abnormally folded protein. The agent was similar in size to viruses. These agents were called prions. The most notable diseases caused by prions are bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) commonly called mad cow disease in cattle and its analogous variant Creutzfeldt–Jacob disease (CJD) in humans.

Lichens : Lichens are symbiotic associations i.e. mutually useful associations, between algae and fungi. The algal component is known as **phycobiont** and fungal component as **mycobiont,** which are autotrophic and heterotrophic, respectively. Algae prepare food for fungi and fungi provide shelter and absorb mineral nutrients and water for its partner. So close is their association that if one saw a lichen in nature one would never imagine that they had two different organisms within them. Lichens are very good pollution indicators – they do not grow in polluted areas.

SUMMARY

Biological classification of plants and animals was first proposed by Aristotle on the basis of simple morphological characters. Linnaeus later classified all living organisms into two kingdoms – Plantae and Animalia. Whittaker proposed an elaborate five kingdom classification – Monera, Protista, Fungi, Plantae and Animalia. The main criteria of the five kingdom classification were cell structure, body organisation, mode of nutrition and reproduction, and phylogenetic relationships.

In the five kingdom classification, bacteria are included in Kingdom Monera. Bacteria are cosmopolitan in distribution. These organisms show the most extensive metabolic diversity. Bacteria may be autotrophic or heterotrophic in their mode of nutrition. Kingdom Protista includes all single-celled eukaryotes such as Chrysophytes, Dinoflagellates, Euglenoids, Slime-moulds and Protozoans. Protists have defined nucleus and other membrane bound organelles. They reproduce both asexually and sexually. Members of Kingdom Fungi show a great diversity in structures and habitat. Most fungi are saprophytic in their mode of nutrition. They show asexual and sexual reproduction. Phycomycetes, Ascomycetes, Basidiomycetes and Deuteromycetes are the four classes under this kingdom. The plantae includes all eukaryotic chlorophyll-containing organisms. Algae, bryophytes, pteridophytes, gymnosperms and angiosperms are included in this group. The life cycle of plants exhibit alternation of generations – gametophytic and sporophytic generations. The heterotrophic eukaryotic, multicellular organisms lacking a cell wall are included in the Kingdom Animalia. The mode of

EXERCISES

1. Discuss how classification systems have undergone several changes over a period of time?
2. State two economically important uses of:
   (a) heterotrophic bacteria
   (b) archaebacteria
3. What is the nature of cell-walls in diatoms?
4. Find out what do the terms 'algal bloom' and 'red-tides' signify.
5. How are viroids different from viruses?
6. Describe briefly the four major groups of Protozoa.
7. Plants are autotrophic. Can you think of some plants that are partially heterotrophic?
8. What do the terms phycobiont and mycobiont signify?
9. Give a comparative account of the classes of Kingdom Fungi under the following:
   (i) mode of nutrition
   (ii) mode of reproduction
10. What are the characteristic features of Euglenoids?
11. Give a brief account of viruses with respect to their structure and nature of genetic material. Also name four common viral diseases.
12. Organise a discussion in your class on the topic – Are viruses living or non-living?

CHAPTER 3

PLANT KINGDOM

3.1 Algae
3.2 Bryophytes
3.3 Pteridophytes
3.4 Gymnosperms
3.5 Angiosperms

In the previous chapter, we looked at the broad classification of living organisms under the system proposed by Whittaker (1969) wherein he suggested the Five Kingdom classification viz. Monera, Protista, Fungi, Animalia and Plantae. In this chapter, we will deal in detail with further classification within Kingdom Plantae popularly known as the 'plant kingdom'.

We must stress here that our understanding of the plant kingdom has changed over time. Fungi, and members of the Monera and Protista having cell walls have now been excluded from Plantae though earlier classifications placed them in the same kingdom. So, the cyanobacteria that are also referred to as blue green algae are not 'algae' any more. In this chapter, we will describe Algae, Bryophytes, Pteridophytes, Gymnosperms and Angiosperms under Plantae.

Let us also look at classification within angiosperms to understand some of the concerns that influenced the classification systems. The earliest systems of classification used only gross superficial morphological characters such as habit, colour, number and shape of leaves, etc. They were based mainly on vegetative characters or on the androecium structure (system given by Linnaeus). Such systems were **artificial;** they separated the closely related species since they were based on a few characteristics. Also, the artificial systems gave equal weightage to vegetative and sexual characteristics; this is not acceptable since we know that often the vegetative characters are more easily affected by environment. As against this, **natural classification systems** developed, which were based on natural affinities among the organisms and consider, not only the external features, but also internal features, like ultra-structure, anatomy, embryology and phytochemistry. Such a classification for flowering plants was given by George Bentham and Joseph Dalton Hooker.

At present **phylogenetic classification systems** based on evolutionary relationships between the various organisms are acceptable. This assumes that organisms belonging to the same taxa have a common ancestor. We now use information from many other sources too to help resolve difficulties in classification. These become more important when there is no supporting fossil evidence. **Numerical Taxonomy** which is now easily carried out using computers is based on all observable characteristics. Number and codes are assigned to all the characters and the data are then processed. In this way each character is given equal importance and at the same time hundreds of characters can be considered. **Cytotaxonomy,** that is based on cytological information like chromosome number, structure, behaviour and **chemotaxonomy,** that uses the chemical constituents of the plant to resolve confusions, are also used by taxonomists these days.

3.1 ALGAE

Algae are chlorophyll-bearing, simple, thalloid, autotrophic and largely aquatic (both fresh water and marine) organisms. They occur in a variety of other habitats: moist stones, soils and wood. Some of them also occur in association with fungi (lichen) and animals (e.g., on sloth bear).

The form and size of algae is highly variable, ranging from colonial forms like *Volvox* and the filamentous forms like *Ulothrix* and *Spirogyra* (Figure 3.1). A few of the marine forms such as kelps, form massive plant bodies.

The algae reproduce by vegetative, asexual and sexual methods. Vegetative reproduction is by fragmentation. Each fragment develops into a thallus. Asexual reproduction is by the production of different types of spores, the most common being the **zoospores**. They are flagellated (motile) and on germination gives rise to new plants. Sexual reproduction takes place through fusion of two gametes. These gametes can be flagellated and similar in size (as in *Ulothrix*) or non-flagellated (non-motile) but similar in size (as in *Spirogyra*). Such reproduction is called **isogamous**. Fusion of two gametes dissimilar in size, as in species of *Eudorina* is termed as **anisogamous**. Fusion between one large, non-motile (static) female gamete and a smaller, motile male gamete is termed **oogamous**, e.g., *Volvox, Fucus.*

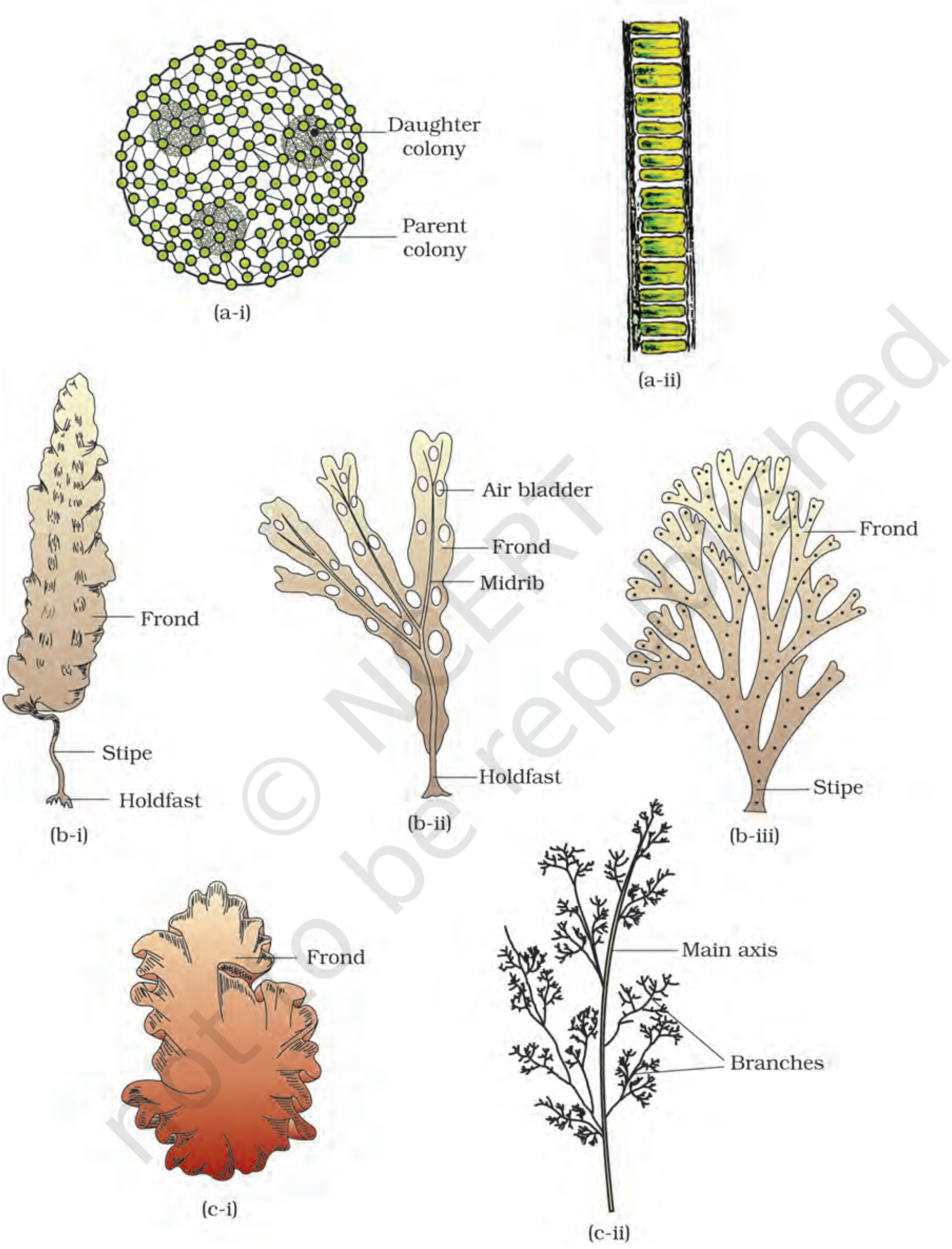
Daughter colony
Parent colony
(a-i)
(a-ii)
Air bladder
Frond
Midrib
Frond
Frond
Stipe
Holdfast
(b-i)
Holdfast
(b-ii)
Stipe
(b-iii)
Frond
(c-i)
Main axis
Branches
(c-ii)

Figure 3.1 Algae : (a) Green algae (i) *Volvox* (ii) *Ulothrix*
(b) Brown algae (i) *Laminaria* (ii) *Fucus* (iii) *Dictyota*
(c) Red algae (i) *Porphyra* (ii) *Polysiphonia*

Algae are useful to man in a variety of ways. At least a half of the total carbon dioxide fixation on earth is carried out by algae through photosynthesis. Being photosynthetic, they increase the level of dissolved oxygen in their immediate environment. They are of paramount importance as primary producers of energy-rich compounds which form the basis of the food cycles of all aquatic animals. Many species of *Porphyra, Laminaria* and *Sargassum* are among the 70 species of marine algae used as food. Certain marine brown and red algae produce large amounts of hydrocolloids (water holding substances), e.g., **algin** (brown algae) and **carrageen** (red algae) which are used commercially. Agar, one of the commercial products obtained from *Gelidium* and *Gracilaria* are used to grow microbes and in preparations of ice-creams and jellies. *Chlorella,* a unicellular alga rich in proteins, is used as food supplement even by space travellers. The algae are divided into three main classes: **Chlorophyceae, Phaeophyceae** and **Rhodophyceae.**

3.1.1 Chlorophyceae

The members of chlorophyceae are commonly called **green algae**. The plant body may be unicellular, colonial or filamentous. They are usually grass green due to the dominance of pigments chlorophyll *a* and *b*. The pigments are localised in definite chloroplasts. The chloroplasts may be discoid, plate-like, reticulate, cup-shaped, spiral or ribbon-shaped in different species. Most of the members have one or more storage bodies called pyrenoids located in the chloroplasts. Pyrenoids contain protein besides starch. Some algae may store food in the form of oil droplets. Green algae usually have a rigid cell wall made of an inner layer of cellulose and an outer layer of pectose.

Vegetative reproduction usually takes place by fragmentation. Asexual reproduction is by flagellated zoospores produced in zoosporangia. The sexual reproduction shows considerable variation in the type and formation of sex cells and it may be isogamous, anisogamous or oogamous. Some commonly found green algae are: *Chlamydomonas, Volvox, Ulothrix, Spirogyra* and *Chara* (Figure 3.1a).

3.1.2 Phaeophyceae

The members of phaeophyceae or **brown algae** are found primarily in marine habitats. They show great variation in size and form. They range from simple branched, filamentous forms (*Ectocarpus*) to profusely branched forms as represented by kelps, which may reach a height of 100 metres. They possess chlorophyll *a*, *c*, carotenoids and xanthophylls. They vary in colour from olive green to various shades of brown depending upon the amount of the xanthophyll pigment, fucoxanthin present in them. Food is stored as complex carbohydrates, which may be in the form of laminarin or mannitol. The vegetative cells have a cellulosic wall usually covered on the outside by a gelatinous coating of **algin**. The protoplast contains, in addition to plastids, a centrally located vacuole and nucleus. The plant body is usually attached to the substratum by a **holdfast**, and has a stalk, the **stipe** and leaf like photosynthetic organ – the **frond**. Vegetative reproduction takes place by fragmentation. Asexual reproduction in most brown algae is by biflagellate zoospores that are pear-shaped and have two unequal laterally attached flagella.

Sexual reproduction may be isogamous, anisogamous or oogamous. Union of gametes may take place in water or within the oogonium (oogamous species). The gametes are pyriform (pear-shaped) and bear two laterally attached flagella. The common forms are *Ectocarpus, Dictyota, Laminaria, Sargassum* and *Fucus* (Figure 3.1b).

3.1.3 Rhodophyceae

The members of rhodophyceae are commonly called **red algae** because of the predominance of the red pigment, r-phycoerythrin in their body. Majority of the red algae are marine with greater concentrations found in the warmer areas. They occur in both well-lighted regions close to the surface of water and also at great depths in oceans where relatively little light penetrates.

The red thalli of most of the red algae are multicellular. Some of them have complex body organisation. The food is stored as floridean starch which is very similar to amylopectin and glycogen in structure.

The red algae usually reproduce vegetatively by fragmentation. They reproduce asexually by non-motile spores and sexually by non-motile

TABLE 3.1 **Divisions of Algae and their Main Characteristics**

Classes	**Common Name**	**Major Pigments**	**Stored Food**	**Cell Wall**	**Flagellar Number and Position of Insertions**	**Habitat**
Chlorophyceae	Green algae	Chlorophyll *a, b*	Starch	Cellulose	2-8, equal, apical	Fresh water, brackish water, salt water
Phaeophyceae	Brown algae	Chlorophyll *a, c,* fucoxanthin	Mannitol, laminarin	Cellulose and algin	2, unequal, lateral	Fresh water (rare), brackish water, salt water
Rhodophyceae	Red algae	Chlorophyll *a, d,* phycoerythrin	Floridean starch	Cellulose, pectin and poly sulphate esters	Absent	Fresh water (some), brackish water, salt water (most)

gametes. Sexual reproduction is oogamous and accompanied by complex post fertilisation developments. The common members are: *Polysiphonia, Porphyra* (Figure 3.1c), *Gracilaria* and *Gelidium.*

3.2 BRYOPHYTES

Bryophytes include the various mosses and liverworts that are found commonly growing in moist shaded areas in the hills (Figure 3.2).

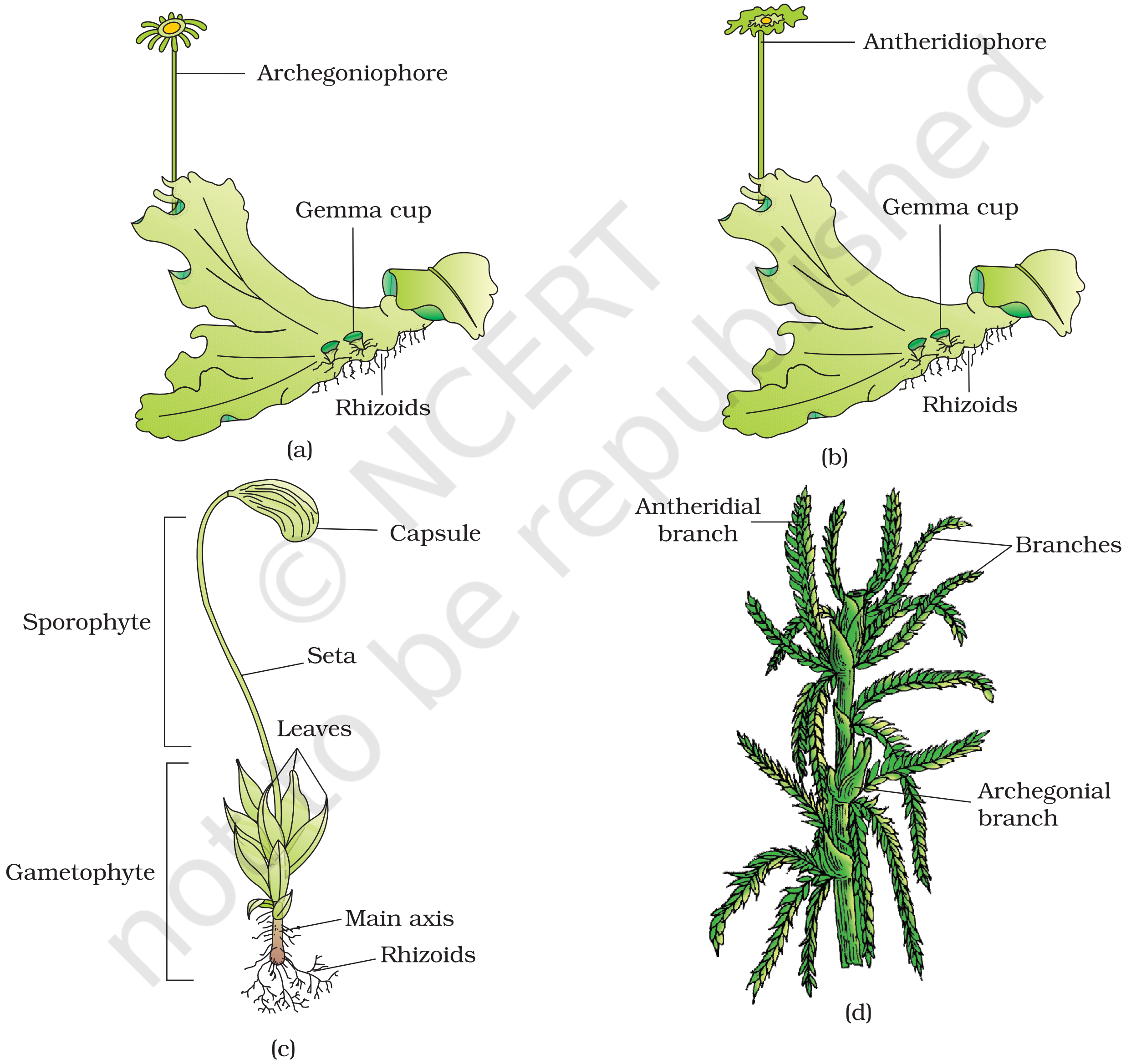
Archegoniophore
Gemma cup
Rhizoids
(a)
Antheridiophore
Gemma cup
Rhizoids
(b)
Capsule
Sporophyte
Seta
Leaves
Gametophyte
Main axis
Rhizoids
(c)
Antheridial branch
Branches
Archegonial branch
(d)

Figure 3.2 Bryophytes: A liverwort – *Marchantia* (a) Female thallus (b) Male thallus Mosses – (c) *Funaria*, gametophyte and sporophyte (d) *Sphagnum* gametophyte

Bryophytes are also called amphibians of the plant kingdom because these plants can live in soil but are dependent on water for sexual reproduction. They usually occur in damp, humid and shaded localities. They play an important role in plant succession on bare rocks/soil.

The plant body of bryophytes is more differentiated than that of algae. It is thallus-like and prostrate or erect, and attached to the substratum by unicellular or multicellular rhizoids. They lack true roots, stem or leaves. They may possess root-like, leaf-like or stem-like structures. The main plant body of the bryophyte is haploid. It produces gametes, hence is called a **gametophyte**. The sex organs in bryophytes are multicellular. The male sex organ is called **antheridium.** They produce biflagellate **antherozoids**. The female sex organ called **archegonium** is flask-shaped and produces a single egg. The antherozoids are released into water where they come in contact with archegonium. An antherozoid fuses with the egg to produce the zygote. Zygotes do not undergo reduction division immediately. They produce a multicellular body called a **sporophyte**. The sporophyte is not free-living but attached to the photosynthetic gametophyte and derives nourishment from it. Some cells of the sporophyte undergo reduction division (meiosis) to produce haploid spores. These spores germinate to produce gametophyte.

Bryophytes in general are of little economic importance but some mosses provide food for herbaceous mammals, birds and other animals. Species of *Sphagnum*, a moss, provide peat that have long been used as fuel, and as packing material for trans-shipment of living material because of their capacity to hold water. Mosses along with lichens are the first organisms to colonise rocks and hence, are of great ecological importance. They decompose rocks making the substrate suitable for the growth of higher plants. Since mosses form dense mats on the soil, they reduce the impact of falling rain and prevent soil erosion. The bryophytes are divided into **liverworts** and **mosses**.

3.2.1 Liverworts

The liverworts grow usually in moist, shady habitats such as banks of streams, marshy ground, damp soil, bark of trees and deep in the woods. The plant body of a liverwort is thalloid, e.g., *Marchantia*. The thallus is dorsiventral and closely appressed to the substrate. The leafy members have tiny leaf-like appendages in two rows on the stem-like structures.

Asexual reproduction in liverworts takes place by fragmentation of thalli, or by the formation of specialised structures called **gemmae** (sing. gemma). Gemmae are green, multicellular, asexual buds, which develop in small receptacles called gemma cups located on the thalli. The gemmae become detached from the parent body and germinate to form new individuals. During sexual reproduction, male and female sex organs are produced either on the same or on different thalli. The sporophyte is differentiated into a foot, seta and capsule. After meiosis, spores are produced within the capsule. These spores germinate to form free-living gametophytes.

3.2.2 Mosses

The predominant stage of the life cycle of a moss is the gametophyte which consists of two stages. The first stage is the **protonema** stage, which develops directly from a spore. It is a creeping, green, branched and frequently filamentous stage. The second stage is the **leafy stage**, which develops from the secondary protonema as a lateral bud. They consist of upright, slender axes bearing spirally arranged leaves. They are attached to the soil through multicellular and branched rhizoids. This stage bears the sex organs.

Vegetative reproduction in mosses is by fragmentation and budding in the secondary protonema. In sexual reproduction, the sex organs antheridia and archegonia are produced at the apex of the leafy shoots. After fertilisation, the zygote develops into a sporophyte, consisting of a foot, seta and capsule. The sporophyte in mosses is more elaborate than that in liverworts. The capsule contains spores. Spores are formed after meiosis. The mosses have an elaborate mechanism of spore dispersal. Common examples of mosses are *Funaria, Polytrichum* and *Sphagnum* (Figure 3.2).

3.3 PTERIDOPHYTES

The Pteridophytes include horsetails and ferns. Pteridophytes are used for medicinal purposes and as soil-binders. They are also frequently grown as ornamentals. Evolutionarily, they are the first terrestrial plants to possess vascular tissues – xylem and phloem. You shall study more about these tissues in Chapter 6. The pteridophytes are found in cool, damp, shady places though some may flourish well in sandy-soil conditions.

You may recall that in bryophytes the dominant phase in the life cycle is the gametophytic plant body. However, in pteridophytes, the main plant body is a sporophyte which is differentiated into true root, stem and leaves (Figure 3.3). These organs possess well-differentiated vascular tissues. The leaves in pteridophyta are small (microphylls) as in *Selaginella* or large (macrophylls) as in ferns. The sporophytes bear sporangia that are subtended by leaf-like appendages called **sporophylls**. In some cases sporophylls may form distinct compact structures called strobili or cones (*Selaginella, Equisetum*). The sporangia produce spores by meiosis in spore mother cells. The spores germinate to give rise to inconspicuous, small but multicellular,

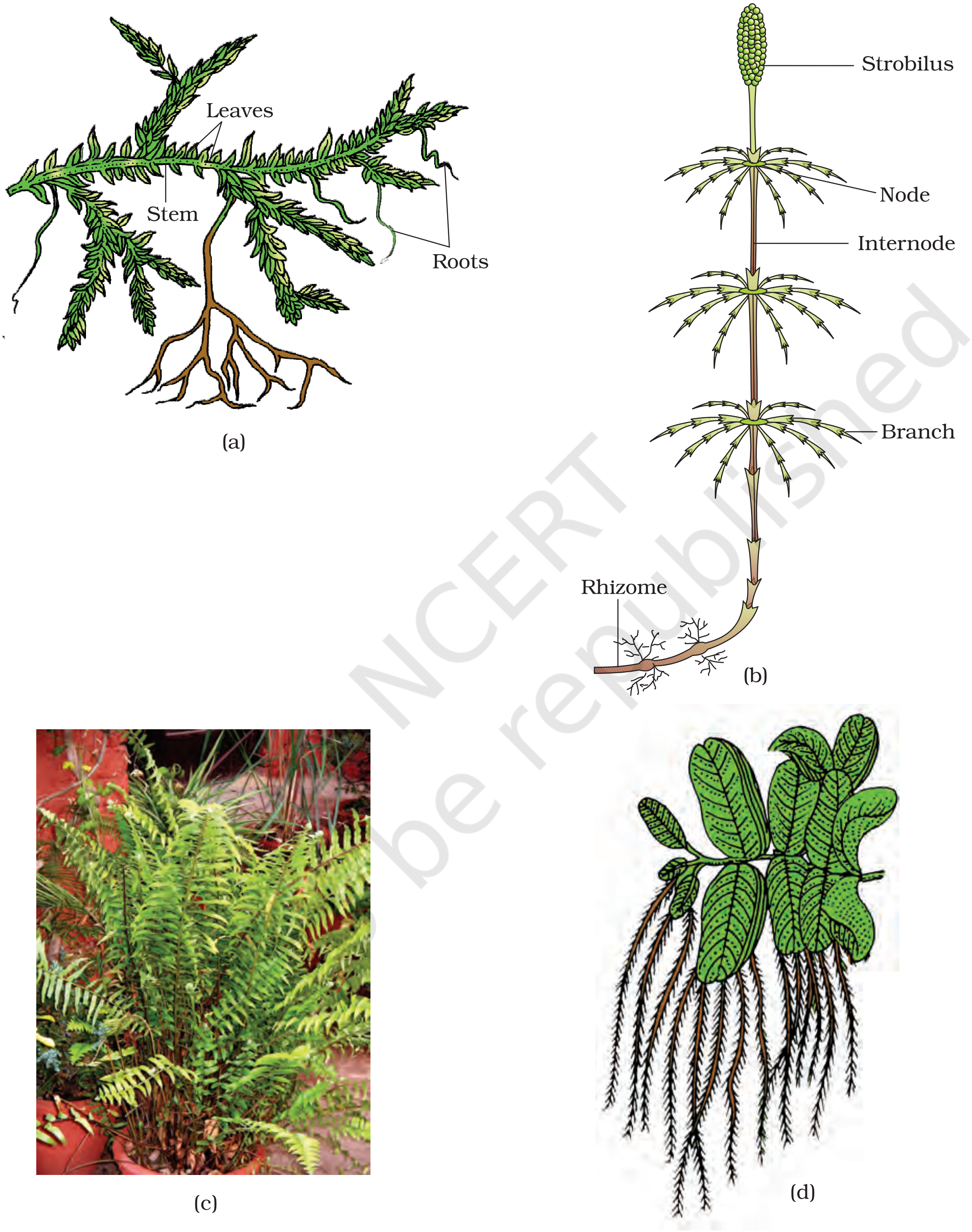
Leaves
Stem
Roots
(a)
Strobilus
Node
Internode
Branch
Rhizome
(b)
(c)
(d)

Figure 3.3 Pteridophytes : (a) *Selaginella* (b) *Equisetum* (c) Fern (d) *Salvinia*

free-living, mostly photosynthetic thalloid gametophytes called **prothallus**. These gametophytes require cool, damp, shady places to grow. Because of this specific restricted requirement and the need for water for fertilisation, the spread of living pteridophytes is limited and restricted to narrow geographical regions. The gametophytes bear male and female sex organs called antheridia and archegonia, respectively. Water is required for transfer of antherozoids – the male gametes released from the antheridia, to the mouth of archegonium. Fusion of male gamete with the egg present in the archegonium result in the formation of zygote. Zygote thereafter produces a multicellular well-differentiated sporophyte which is the dominant phase of the pteridophytes. In majority of the pteridophytes all the spores are of similar kinds; such plants are called **homosporous**. Genera like *Selaginella* and *Salvinia* which produce two kinds of spores, macro (large) and micro (small) spores, are known as **heterosporous**. The megaspores and microspores germinate and give rise to female and male gametophytes, respectively. The female gametophytes in these plants are retained on the parent sporophytes for variable periods. The development of the zygotes into young embryos take place within the female gametophytes. This event is a precursor to the **seed habit** considered an important step in evolution.

The pteridophytes are further classified into four classes: Psilopsida *(Psilotum);* Lycopsida *(Selaginella, Lycopodium)*, Sphenopsida *(Equisetum)* and Pteropsida *(Dryopteris, Pteris, Adiantum)*.

3.4 GYMNOSPERMS

The gymnosperms (*gymnos* : naked, *sperma* : seeds) are plants in which the ovules are not enclosed by any ovary wall and remain exposed, both before and after fertilisation. The seeds that develop post-fertilisation, are not covered, i.e., are naked. Gymnosperms include medium-sized trees or tall trees and shrubs (Figure 3.4). One of the gymnosperms, the giant redwood tree *Sequoia* is one of the tallest tree species. The roots are generally tap roots. Roots in some genera have fungal association in the form of **mycorrhiza** *(Pinus)*, while in some others *(Cycas)* small specialised roots called coralloid roots are associated with N_2- fixing cyanobacteria. The stems are unbranched (*Cycas*) or branched (*Pinus, Cedrus*). The leaves may be simple or compound. In *Cycas* the pinnate leaves persist for a few years. The leaves in gymnosperms are well-adapted to withstand extremes of temperature, humidity and wind. In conifers, the needle-like leaves reduce the surface area. Their thick cuticle and sunken stomata also help to reduce water loss.

The gymnosperms are heterosporous; they produce haploid microspores and megaspores. The two kinds of spores are produced within sporangia that are borne on sporophylls which are arranged spirally along an axis to form lax or compact strobili or **cones**. The strobili bearing **microsporophylls** and **microsporangia** are called microsporangiate or **male strobili**. The microspores develop into a male gametophytic generation which is highly reduced and is confined to only a limited number of cells. This reduced gametophyte is called a **pollen grain**. The development of pollen grains take place within the microsporangia. The cones bearing megasporophylls with ovules or **megasporangia** are called macrosporangiate or **female strobili**. The male or female cones or strobili may be borne on the same tree (*Pinus*). However, in *cycas* male cones and megasporophylls are borne on different trees. The megaspore mother cell is differentiated from one of the cells of the nucellus. The nucellus is protected by envelopes and the composite structure is called an **ovule**. The ovules are borne on megasporophylls which may be clustered to form the female cones. The megaspore mother cell divides meiotically to form four megaspores. One of the megaspores enclosed within the **megasporangium** develops into a multicellular female gametophyte that bears two or more **archegonia** or female sex organs. The multicellular female gametophyte is also retained within megasporangium.

Unlike bryophytes and pteridophytes, in gymnosperms, the male and the female gametophytes do not have an independent free-living existence. They remain within the sporangia retained on the sporophytes. The pollen grain is released from the microsporangium. They are carried in air currents and come in contact with the opening of the ovules borne on megasporophylls. The pollen tube carrying the male gametes grows towards archegonia in the ovules and discharge their contents near the mouth of the archegonia. Following fertilisation, zygote develops into an embryo and the ovules into seeds. These seeds are not covered.

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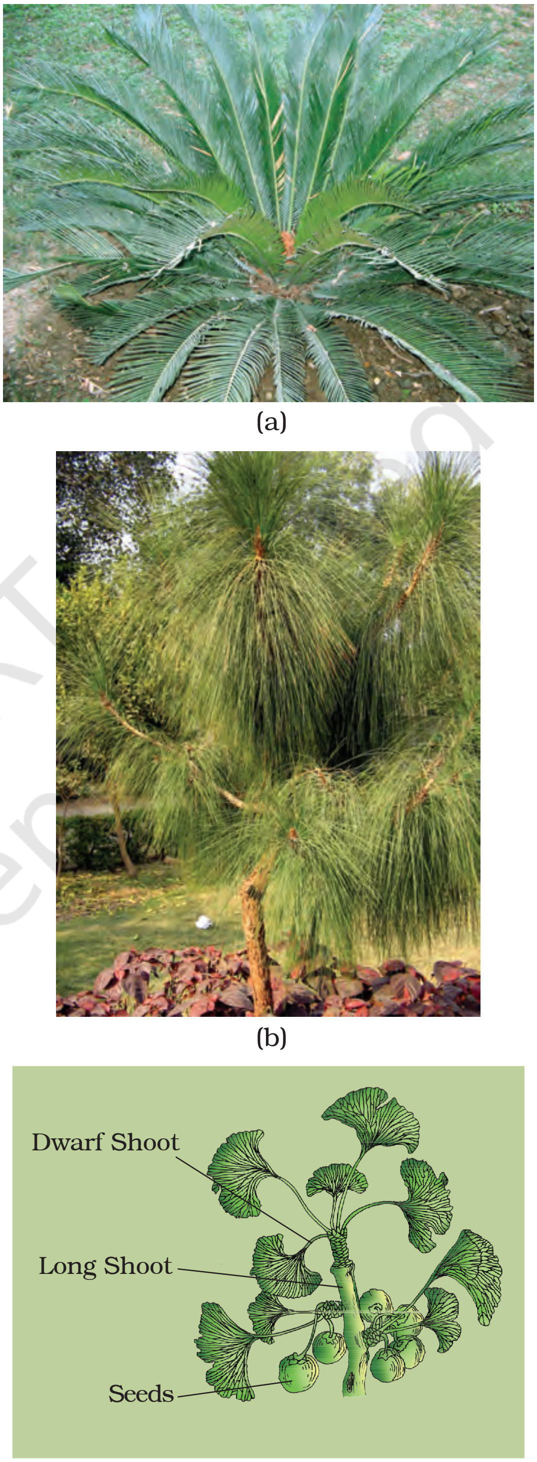

(a)

(b)

(c)

Figure 3.4 Gymnosperms: (a) *Cycas* (b) *Pinus* (c) *Ginkgo*

3.5 ANGIOSPERMS

Unlike the gymnosperms where the ovules are naked, in the angiosperms or flowering plants, the pollen grains and ovules are developed in specialised structures called **flowers**. In angiosperms, the seeds are enclosed in fruits. The angiosperms are an exceptionally large group of plants occurring in wide range of habitats. They range in size from the smallest *Wolffia* to tall trees of *Eucalyptus* (over 100 metres). They provide us with food, fodder, fuel, medicines and several other commercially important products. They are divided into two classes : the **dicotyledons** and the **monocotyledons** (Figure 3.5).

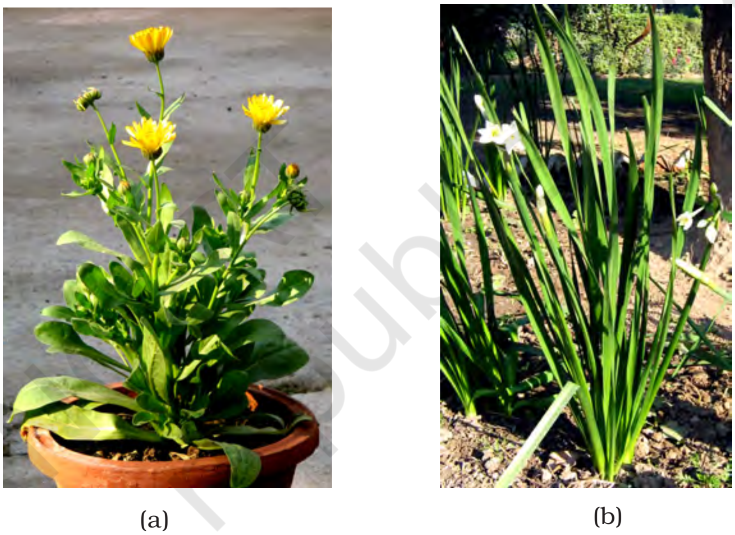
(a) (b)

Figure 3.5 Angiosperms : (a) A dicotyledon (b) A monocotyledon

SUMMARY

Plant kingdom includes algae, bryophytes, pteridophytes, gymnosperms and angiosperms. Algae are chlorophyll-bearing simple, thalloid, autotrophic and largely aquatic organisms. Depending on the type of pigment possesed and the type of stored food, algae are classfied into three classes, namely Chlorophyceae, Phaeophyceae and Rhodophyceae. Algae usually reproduce vegetatively by fragmentation, asexually by formation of different types of spores and sexually by formation of gametes which may show isogamy, anisogamy or oogamy.

Bryophytes are plants which can live in soil but are dependent on water for sexual reproduction. Their plant body is more differentiated than that of algae. It is thallus-like and prostrate or erect and attached to the substratum by rhizoids. They possess root-like, leaf-like and stem-like structures. The bryophytes are divided into liverworts and mosses. The plant body of liverworts is thalloid and dorsiventral whereas mosses have upright, slender axes bearing spirally arranged leaves. The main plant body of a bryophyte is gamete-producing and is called a gametophyte. It bears the male sex organs called antheridia and female sex organs called archegonia. The male and female gametes produced fuse to form zygote which produces a multicellular body called a sporophyte. It produces haploid spores. The spores germinate to form gametophytes.

In pteridophytes the main plant is a sporophyte which is differentiated into true root, stem and leaves. These organs possess well-differentiated vascular tissues. The sporophytes bear sporangia which produce spores. The spores germinate to form gametophytes which require cool, damp places to grow. The gametophytes bear male and female sex organs called antheridia and archegonia, respectively. Water is required for transfer of male gametes to archegonium where zygote is formed after fertilisation. The zygote produces a sporophyte.

The gymnosperms are the plants in which ovules are not enclosed by any ovary wall. After fertilisation the seeds remain exposed and therefore these plants are called naked-seeded plants. The gymnosperms produce microspores and megaspores which are produced in microsporangia and megasporangia borne on the sporophylls. The sporophylls – microsporophylls and megasporophylls – are arranged spirally on axis to form male and female cones, respectively. The pollen grain germinates and pollen tube releases the male gamete into the ovule, where it fuses with the egg cell in archegonia. Following fertilisation, the zygote develops into embryo and the ovules into seeds.

The angiosperms are divided into two classes – the dicotyledons and the monocotyledons.

EXERCISES

1. What is the basis of classification of algae?
2. When and where does reduction division take place in the life cycle of a liverwort, a moss, a fern, a gymnosperm and an angiosperm?
3. Name three groups of plants that bear archegonia. Briefly describe the life cycle of any one of them.
4. Mention the ploidy of the following: protonemal cell of a moss; primary endosperm nucleus in dicot, leaf cell of a moss; prothallus cell of a ferm; gemma cell in *Marchantia*; meristem cell of monocot, ovum of a liverwort, and zygote of a fern.

5. Write a note on economic importance of algae and gymnosperms.
6. Both gymnosperms and angiosperms bear seeds, then why are they classified separately?
7. What is heterospory? Briefly comment on its significance. Give two examples.
8. Explain briefly the following terms with suitable examples:-
    (i) protonema
    (ii) antheridium
    (iii) archegonium
    (iv) diplontic
    (v) sporophyll
    (vi) isogamy
9. Differentiate between the following:-
    (i) red algae and brown algae
    (ii) liverworts and moss
    (iii) homosporous and heterosporous pteridophyte
10. Match the following (column I with column II)

Column I	**Column II**
(a) *Chlamydomonas*	(i) Moss
(b) *Cycas*	(ii) Pteridophyte
(c) *Selaginella*	(iii) Algae
(d) *Sphagnum*	(iv) Gymnosperm

11. Describe the important characteristics of gymnosperms.

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CHAPTER 4

ANIMAL KINGDOM

4.1 Basis of Classification
4.2 Classification of Animals

When you look around, you will observe different animals with different structures and forms. As over a million species of animals have been described till now, the need for classification becomes all the more important. The classification also helps in assigning a systematic position to newly described species.

4.1 BASIS OF CLASSIFICATION

Inspite of differences in structure and form of different animals, there are fundamental features common to various individuals in relation to the arrangement of cells, body symmetry, nature of coelom, patterns of digestive, circulatory or reproductive systems. These features are used as the basis of animal classification and some of them are discussed here.

4.1.1 Levels of Organisation

Though all members of Animalia are multicellular, all of them do not exhibit the same pattern of organisation of cells. For example, in sponges, the cells are arranged as loose cell aggregates, i.e., they exhibit **cellular level** of organisation. Some division of labour (activities) occur among the cells. In coelenterates, the arrangement of cells is more complex. Here the cells performing the same function are arranged into tissues, hence is called **tissue level** of organisation. A still higher level of organisation, i.e., **organ level** is exhibited by members of Platyhelminthes and other higher phyla where tissues are grouped together to form organs, each specialised for a particular function. In animals like Annelids, Arthropods, Molluscs,

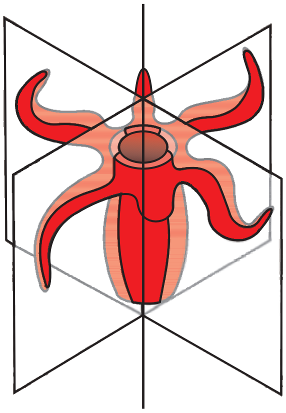


Figure 4.1 (a) Radial symmetry

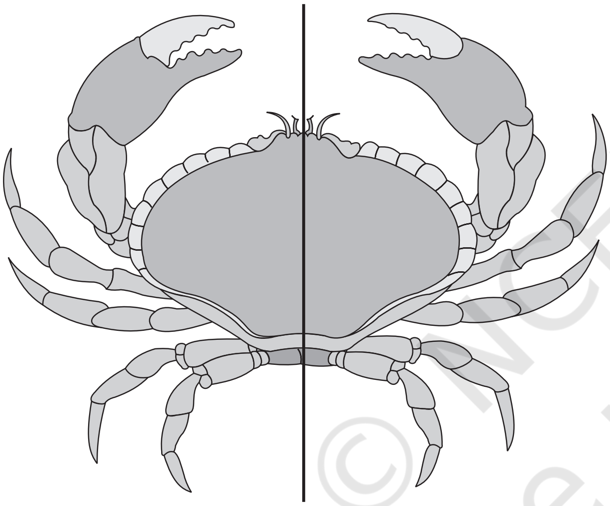


Figure 4.1 (b) Bilateral symmetry

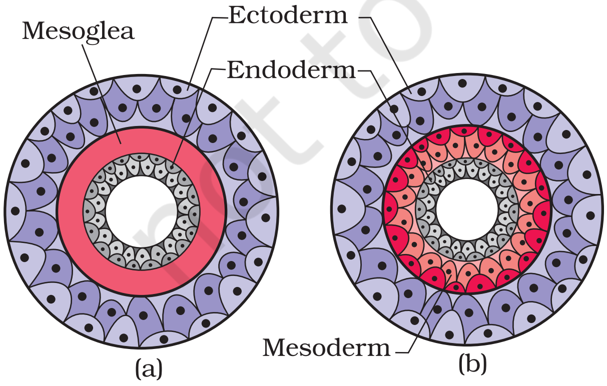


Figure 4.2 Showing germinal layers : (a) Diploblastic (b) Triploblastic

Echinoderms and Chordates, organs have associated to form functional systems, each system concerned with a specific physiological function. This pattern is called **organ system** level of organisation. Organ systems in different groups of animals exhibit various patterns of complexities. For example, the digestive system in Platyhelminthes has only a single opening to the outside of the body that serves as both mouth and anus, and is hence called incomplete. A complete digestive system has two openings, mouth and anus. Similarly, the circulatory system may be of two types:

(i) **open type** in which the blood is pumped out of the heart and the cells and tissues are directly bathed in it and

(ii) **closed type** in which the blood is circulated through a series of vessels of varying diameters (arteries, veins and capillaries).

4.1.2 Symmetry

Animals can be categorised on the basis of their symmetry. Sponges are mostly **asymmetrical,** i.e., any plane that passes through the centre does not divide them into equal halves. When any plane passing through the central axis of the body divides the organism into two identical halves, it is called **radial symmetry**. Coelenterates, ctenophores and echinoderms have this kind of body plan (Figure 4.1a). Animals like annelids, arthropods, etc., where the body can be divided into identical left and right halves in only one plane, exhibit **bilateral symmetry** (Figure 4.1b).

4.1.3 Diploblastic and Triploblastic Organisation

Animals in which the cells are arranged in two embryonic layers, an external **ectoderm** and an internal **endoderm**, are called **diploblastic** animals, e.g., coelenterates. An undifferentiated layer, mesoglea, is present in between the ectoderm and the endoderm (Figure 4.2a).

Those animals in which the developing embryo has a third germinal layer, **mesoderm**, in between the ectoderm and endoderm, are called **triploblastic** animals (platyhelminthes to chordates, Figure 4.2b).

4.1.4 Coelom

Presence or absence of a cavity between the body wall and the gut wall is very important in classification. The body cavity, which is lined by mesoderm is called **coelom**. Animals possessing coelom are called **coelomates,** e.g., annelids, molluscs, arthropods, echinoderms, hemichordates and chordates (Figure 4.3a). In some animals, the body cavity is not lined by mesoderm, instead, the mesoderm is present as scattered pouches in between the ectoderm and endoderm. Such a body cavity is called pseudocoelom and the animals possessing them are called **pseudocoelomates,** e.g., aschelminthes (Figure 4.3b). The animals in which the body cavity is absent are called **acoelomates,** e.g., platyhelminthes (Figure 4.3c).

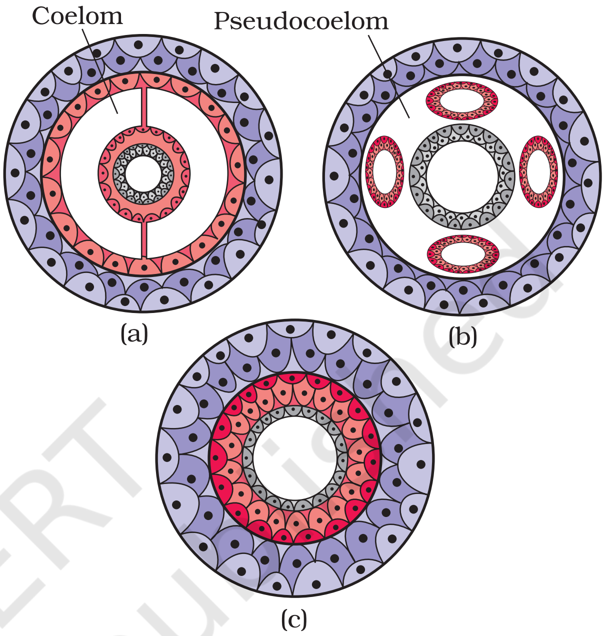


Figure 4.3 Diagrammatic sectional view of : (a) Coelomate (b) Pseudocoelomate (c) Acoelomate

4.1.5 Segmentation

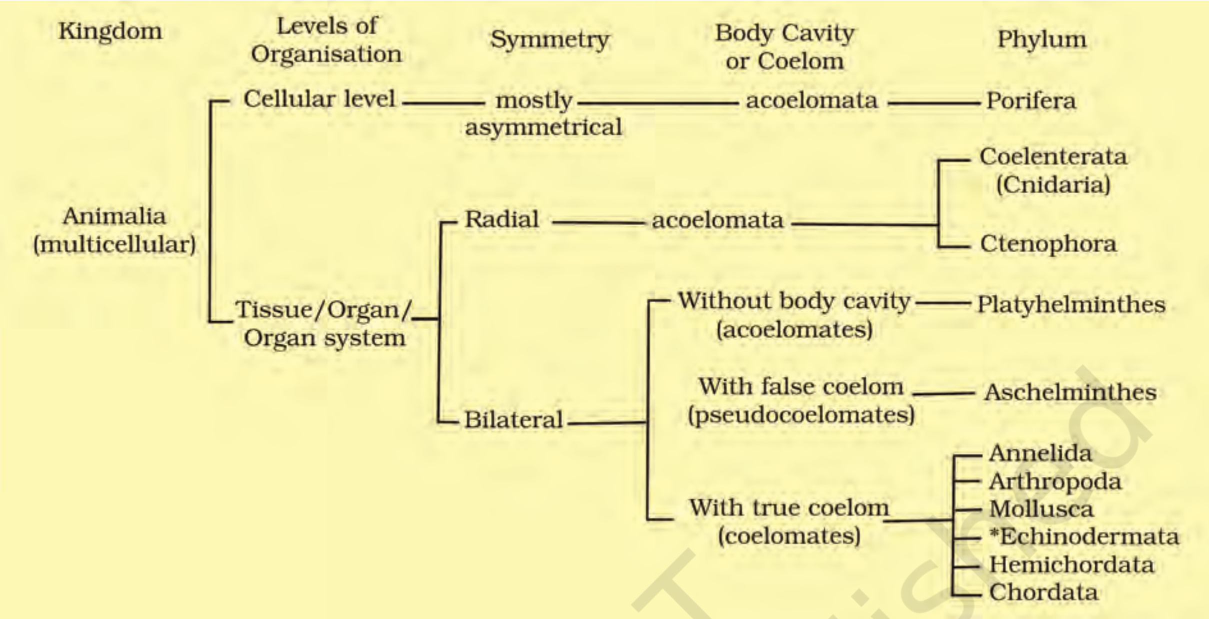
In some animals, the body is externally and internally divided into segments with a serial repetition of at least some organs. For example, in earthworm, the body shows this pattern called metameric segmentation and the phenomenon is known as **metamerism**.

4.1.6 Notochord

Notochord is a mesodermally derived rod-like structure formed on the dorsal side during embryonic development in some animals. Animals with notochord are called chordates and those animals which do not form this structure are called non-chordates, e.g., porifera to echinoderms.

4.2 CLASSIFICATION OF ANIMALS

The broad classification of Animalia, based on common fundamental features as mentioned in the preceding sections, is given in Figure 4.4.


Kingdom
Levels of Organisation
Symmetry
Body Cavity or Coelom
Phylum
Cellular level
mostly asymmetrical
acoelomata
Porifera
Coelenterata (Cnidaria)
Animalia (multicellular)
Radial
acoelomata
Ctenophora
Tissue/Organ/Organ system
Without body cavity (acoelomates)
Platyhelminthes
With false coelom (pseudocoelomates)
Aschelminthes
Bilateral
Annelida
Arthropoda
Mollusca
With true coelom (coelomates)
*Echinodermata
Hemichordata
Chordata

*Echinodermata exhibits radial or bilateral symmetry depending on the stage.

Figure 4.4 Broad classification of Kingdom Animalia based on common fundamental features

The important characteristic features of the different phyla are described.

4.2.1 Phylum – Porifera

Members of this phylum are commonly known as sponges. They are generally marine and mostly asymmetrical animals (Figure 4.5). These are primitive multicellular animals and have cellular level of organisation. Sponges have a water transport or canal system. Water enters through minute pores (**ostia**) in the body wall into a central cavity, **spongocoel**, from where it goes out through the **osculum**. This pathway of water transport is helpful in food gathering, respiratory exchange and removal of waste. **Choanocytes** or collar cells line the spongocoel and the canals. Digestion is intracellular. The body is supported by a skeleton made up of **spicules** or **spongin fibres**. Sexes are not separate (**hermaphrodite**), i.e., eggs and sperms are produced by the same individual. Sponges reproduce asexually by fragmentation and sexually by formation of gametes. Fertilisation is internal and development is indirect having a larval stage which is morphologically distinct from the adult.

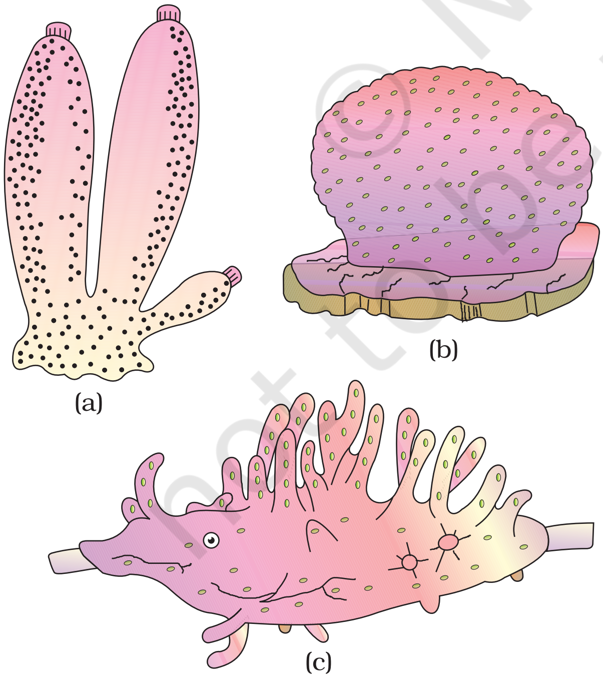


Figure 4.5 Examples of Porifera : (a) *Sycon* (b) *Euspongia* (c) *Spongilla*

Examples: *Sycon* (Scypha), *Spongilla* (Fresh water sponge) and *Euspongia* (Bath sponge).

4.2.2 Phylum – Coelenterata (Cnidaria)

They are aquatic, mostly marine, sessile or free-swimming, radially symmetrical animals (Figure 4.6). The name cnidaria is derived from the cnidoblasts or cnidocytes (which contain the stinging capsules or nematocysts) present on the tentacles and the body. Cnidoblasts are used for anchorage, defense and for the capture of prey (Figure 4.7). Cnidarians exhibit tissue level of organisation and are diploblastic. They have a central gastro-vascular cavity with a single opening, mouth on **hypostome**. Digestion is extracellular and intracellular. Some of the cnidarians, e.g., **corals** have a skeleton composed of calcium carbonate. Cnidarians exhibit two basic body forms called **polyp** and **medusa** (Figure 4.6). The former is a sessile and cylindrical form like Hydra, *Adamsia*, etc. whereas, the latter is umbrella-shaped and free-swimming like *Aurelia* or jelly fish. Those cnidarians which exist in both forms exhibit alternation of generations (Metagenesis), i.e., polyps produce medusae asexually and medusae form the polyps sexually (e.g., *Obelia*).

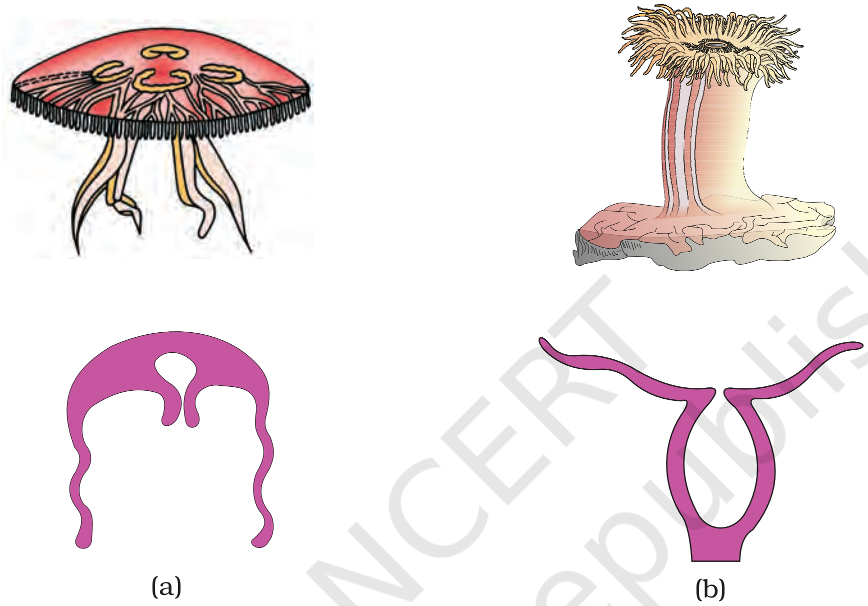

(a) (b)

Figure 4.6 Examples of Coelenterata indicating outline of their body form : (a) *Aurelia* (Medusa) (b) *Adamsia* (Polyp)

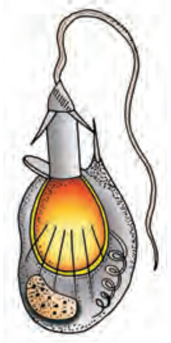


Figure 4.7 Diagrammatic view of Cnidoblast

Examples: *Physalia* (Portuguese man-of-war), *Adamsia* (Sea anemone), *Pennatula* (Sea-pen), *Gorgonia* (Sea-fan) and *Meandrina* (Brain coral).

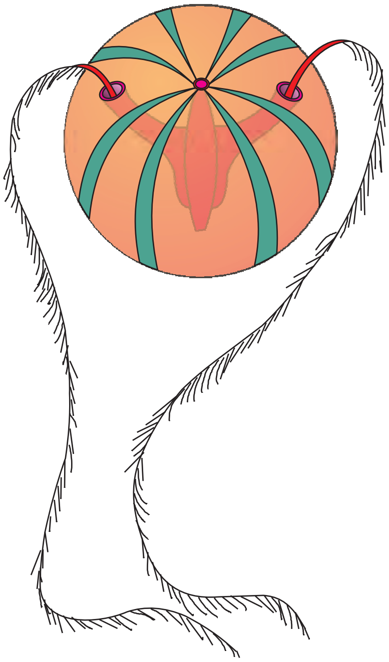


Figure 4.8 Example of Ctenophora (*Pleurobrachia*)

4.2.3 Phylum – Ctenophora

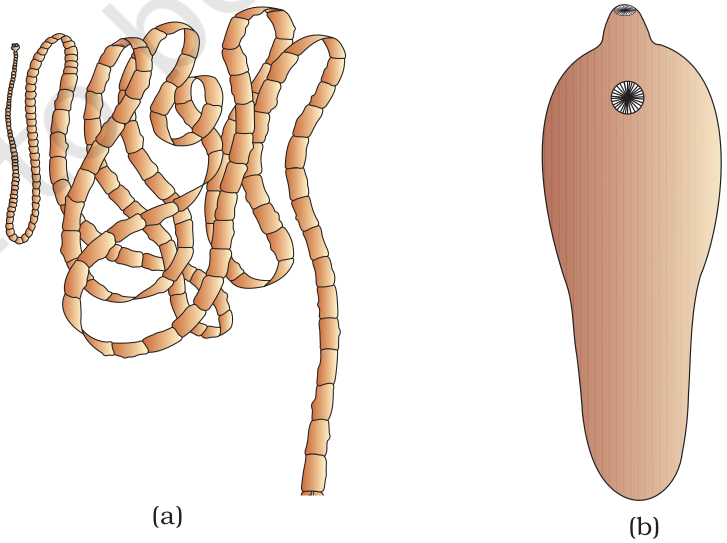
Ctenophores, commonly known as **sea walnuts** or **comb jellies** are exclusively marine, radially symmetrical, diploblastic organisms with tissue level of organisation. The body bears eight external rows of ciliated **comb plates**, which help in locomotion (Figure 4.8). Digestion is both extracellular and intracellular. **Bioluminescence** (the property of a living organism to emit light) is well-marked in ctenophores. Sexes are not separate. Reproduction takes place only by sexual means. Fertilisation is external with indirect development.

Examples: *Pleurobrachia* and *Ctenoplana*.

4.2.4 Phylum – Platyhelminthes

They have dorso-ventrally flattened body, hence are called **flatworms** (Figure 4.9). These are mostly endoparasites found in animals including human beings. Flatworms are bilaterally symmetrical, triploblastic and acoelomate animals with organ level of organisation. Hooks and suckers are present in the parasitic forms. Some of them absorb nutrients from the host directly through their body surface. Specialised cells called flame cells help in osmoregulation and excretion. Sexes are not separate. Fertilisation is internal and development is through many larval stages. Some members like *Planaria* possess high regeneration capacity.

Examples: *Taenia* (Tapeworm), *Fasciola* (Liver fluke).



(a) (b)

Figure 4.9 Examples of Platyhelminthes : (a) Tape worm (b) Liver fluke

4.2.5 Phylum – Aschelminthes

The body of the aschelminthes is circular in cross-section, hence, the name **roundworms** (Figure 4.10). They may be freeliving, aquatic and terrestrial or parasitic in plants and animals. Roundworms have organ-system level of body organisation. They are bilaterally symmetrical, triploblastic and pseudocoelomate animals. Alimentary canal is complete with a well-developed **muscular pharynx.** An excretory tube removes body wastes from the body cavity through the excretory pore. Sexes are separate (**dioecious**), i.e., males and females are distinct. Often females are longer than males. Fertilisation is internal and development may be direct (the young ones resemble the adult) or indirect.

Examples : *Ascaris* (Roundworm), *Wuchereria* (Filaria worm), *Ancylostoma* (Hookworm).

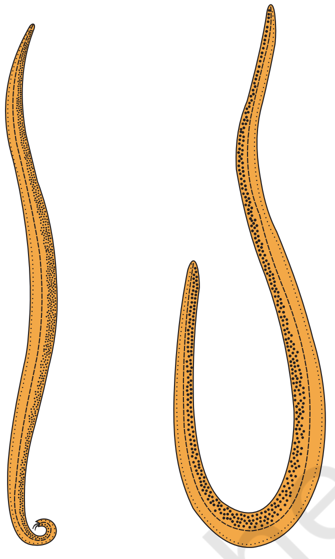


Figure 4.10 Example of Aschelminthes: Roundworm

4.2.6 Phylum – Annelida

They may be aquatic (marine and fresh water) or terrestrial; free-living, and sometimes parasitic. They exhibit organ-system level of body organisation and bilateral symmetry. They are triploblastic, metamerically segmented and coelomate animals. Their body surface is distinctly marked out into **segments** or **metameres** and, hence, the phylum name Annelida (Latin, *annulus* : little ring) (Figure 4.11). They possess longitudinal and circular muscles which help in locomotion. Aquatic annelids like *Nereis* possess lateral appendages, **parapodia**, which help in swimming. A closed circulatory system is present. **Nephridia** (sing. nephridium) help in osmoregulation and excretion. Neural system consists of paired ganglia (sing. ganglion) connected by lateral nerves to a double ventral nerve cord. *Nereis*, an aquatic form, is dioecious, but earthworms and leeches are monoecious. Reproduction is sexual.

Examples : *Nereis*, *Pheretima* (Earthworm) and *Hirudinaria* (Blood sucking leech).

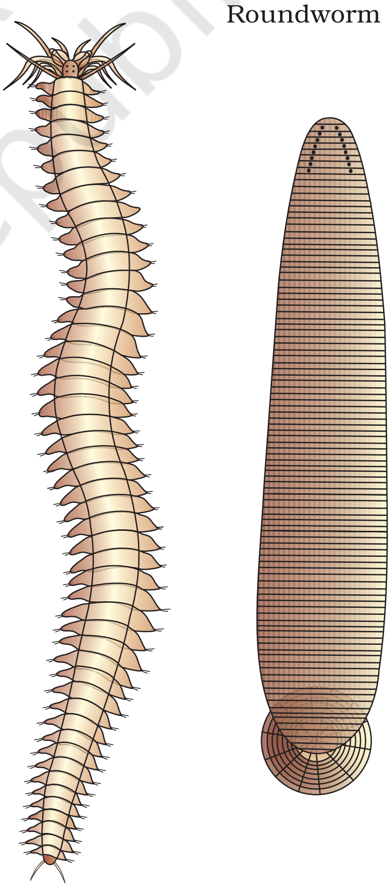


Figure 4.11 Examples of Annelida : (a) *Nereis* (b) *Hirudinaria*

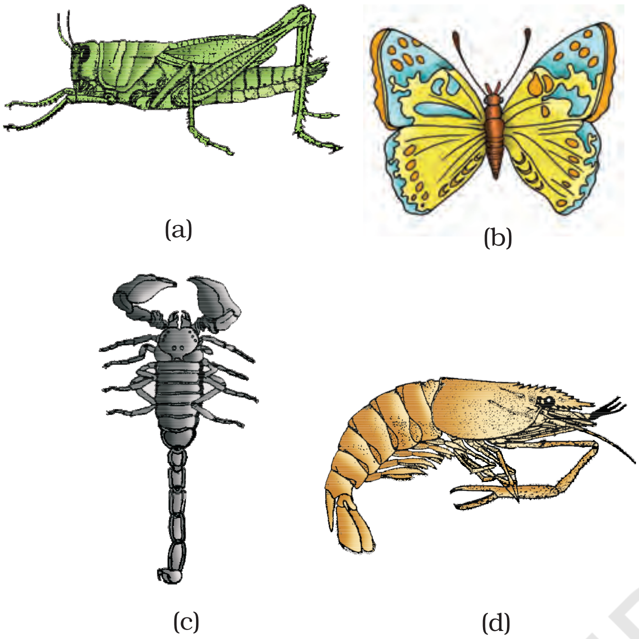


Figure 4.12 Examples of Arthropoda : (a) Locust (b) Butterfly (c) Scorpion (d) Prawn

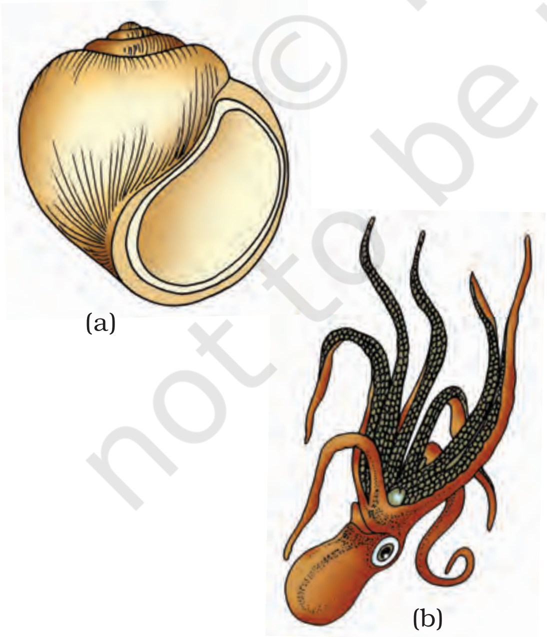


Figure 4.13 Examples of Mollusca : (a) *Pila* (b) *Octopus*

4.2.7 Phylum – Arthropoda

This is the **largest phylum** of Animalia which includes insects. Over two-thirds of all named species on earth are arthropods (Figure 4.12). They have organ-system level of organisation. They are bilaterally symmetrical, triploblastic, segmented and coelomate animals. The body of arthropods is covered by chitinous exoskeleton. The body consists of **head**, **thorax** and **abdomen**. They have **jointed appendages** (arthros-joint, poda-appendages). Respiratory organs are gills, book gills, book lungs or tracheal system. Circulatory system is of open type. Sensory organs like antennae, eyes (compound and simple), statocysts or balancing organs are present. Excretion takes place through **malpighian tubules**. They are mostly dioecious. Fertilisation is usually internal. They are mostly oviparous. Development may be direct or indirect.

Examples: Economically important insects – *Apis* (Honey bee), *Bombyx* (Silkworm), *Laccifer* (Lac insect)
Vectors – *Anopheles*, *Culex* and *Aedes* (Mosquitoes)
Gregarious pest – *Locusta* (Locust)
Living fossil – *Limulus* (King crab).

4.2.8 Phylum – Mollusca

This is the **second largest** animal phylum (Figure 4.13). Molluscs are terrestrial or aquatic (marine or fresh water) having an organ-system level of organisation. They are bilaterally symmetrical, triploblastic and coelomate animals. Body is covered by a calcareous shell and is unsegmented with a distinct **head**, **muscular foot** and **visceral hump**. A soft and spongy layer of skin forms a mantle over the visceral hump. The space between the hump and the mantle is called the mantle cavity in which feather like gills are present. They have respiratory and excretory functions. The anterior head region has sensory tentacles. The mouth contains a file-like rasping organ for feeding, called **radula**.

They are usually dioecious and oviparous with indirect development.
Examples: *Pila* (Apple snail), *Pinctada* (Pearl oyster), *Sepia* (Cuttlefish), *Loligo* (Squid), *Octopus* (Devil fish), *Aplysia* (Sea-hare), *Dentalium* (Tusk shell) and *Chaetopleura* (Chiton).

4.2.9 Phylum – Echinodermata

These animals have an endoskeleton of calcareous ossicles and, hence, the name Echinodermata (Spiny bodied, Figure 4.14). All are marine with organ-system level of organisation. The adult echinoderms are radially symmetrical but larvae are bilaterally symmetrical. They are triploblastic and coelomate animals. Digestive system is complete with mouth on the lower (ventral) side and anus on the upper (dorsal) side. The most distinctive feature of echinoderms is the presence of **water vascular system** which helps in locomotion, capture and transport of food and respiration. An excretory system is absent. Sexes are separate. Reproduction is sexual. Fertilisation is usually external. Development is indirect with free-swimming larva.
Examples: *Asterias* (Star fish), *Echinus* (Sea urchin), *Antedon* (Sea lily), *Cucumaria* (Sea cucumber) and *Ophiura* (Brittle star).

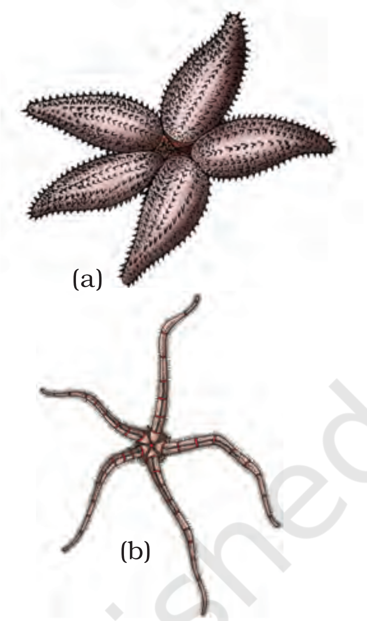


Figure 4.14 Examples of Echinodermata : (a) *Asterias* (b) *Ophiura*

4.2.10 Phylum – Hemichordata

Hemichordata was earlier considered as a sub-phylum under phylum Chordata. But now it is placed as a separate phylum under non-chordata. Hemichordates have a rudimentary structure in the collar region called stomochord, a structure similar to notochord.

This phylum consists of a small group of **worm-like** marine animals with organ-system level of organisation. They are bilaterally symmetrical, triploblastic and coelomate animals. The body is cylindrical and is composed of an anterior **proboscis**, a **collar** and a long **trunk** (Figure 4.15). Circulatory system is of open type. Respiration takes place through gills. Excretory organ is proboscis gland. Sexes are separate. Fertilisation is external. Development is indirect.

Examples: *Balanoglossus* and *Saccoglossus.*

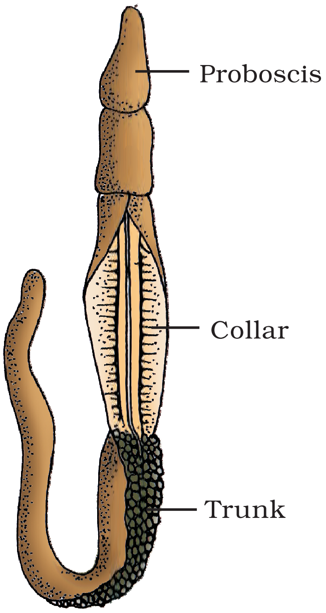


Figure 4.15 *Balanoglossus*

4.2.11 Phylum – Chordata

Animals belonging to phylum Chordata are fundamentally characterised by the presence of a **notochord**, a **dorsal**

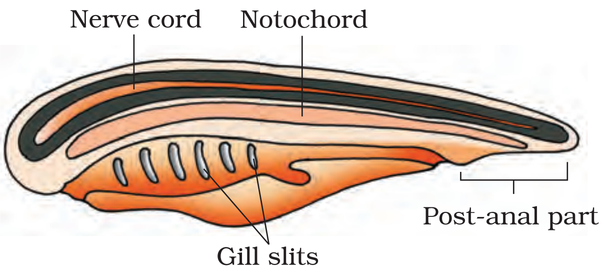


Figure 4.16 Chordata characteristics

hollow nerve cord and **paired pharyngeal gill slits** (Figure 4.16). These are bilaterally symmetrical, triploblastic, coelomate with organ-system level of organisation. They possess a post anal tail and a closed circulatory system.

Table 4.1 presents a comparison of salient features of chordates and non-chordates.

TABLE 4.1 Comparison of Chordates and Non-chordates

S.No.	Chordates	Non-chordates
1.	Notochord present.	Notochord absent.
2.	Central nervous system is dorsal, hollow and single.	Central nervous system is ventral, solid and double.
3.	Pharynx perforated by gill slits.	Gill slits are absent.
4.	Heart is ventral.	Heart is dorsal (if present).
5.	A post-anal part (tail) is present.	Post-anal tail is absent.

Phylum Chordata is divided into three subphyla: **Urochordata** or **Tunicata**, **Cephalochordata** and **Vertebrata**.

Subphyla Urochordata and Cephalochordata are often referred to as **protochordates** (Figure 4.17) and are exclusively marine. In Urochordata, notochord is present only in larval tail, while in Cephalochordata, it extends from head to tail region and is persistent throughout their life.

Examples: Urochordata – *Ascidia, Salpa, Doliolum;* Cephalochordata – *Branchiostoma* (Amphioxus or Lancelet).

The members of subphylum Vertebrata possess notochord during the embryonic period. The notochord is replaced by a cartilaginous or bony **vertebral column** in the adult. Thus all vertebrates are chordates but all chordates are not vertebrates. Besides the basic chordate characters, vertebrates have a ventral muscular heart with two, three or four chambers, kidneys for excretion and osmoregulation and paired appendages which may be fins or limbs.

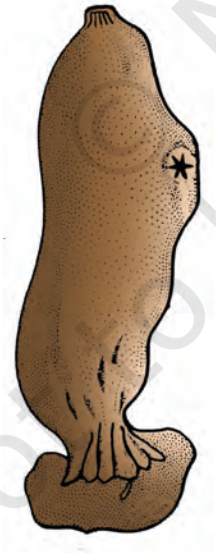
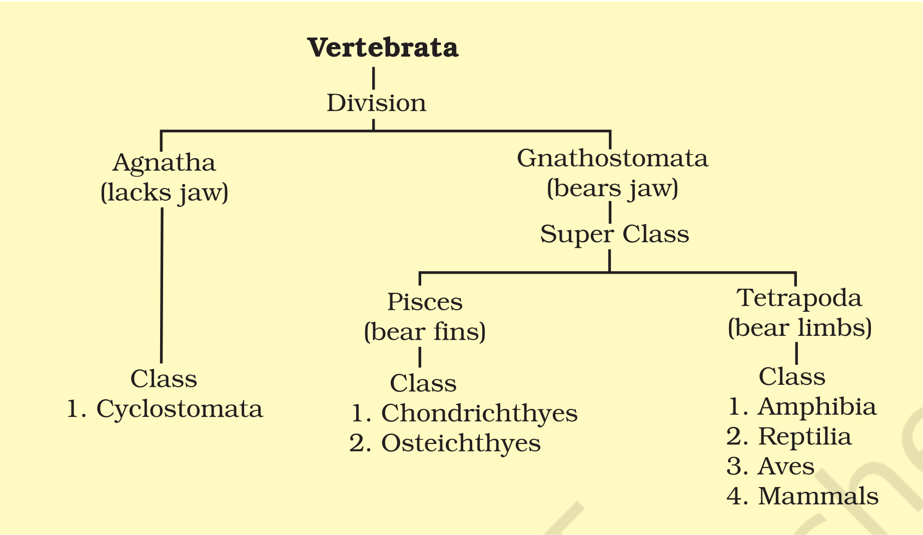


Figure 4.17 *Ascidia*

The subphylum Vertebrata is further divided as follows:


Vertebrata
Division
Agnatha
(lacks jaw)
Gnathostomata
(bears jaw)
Super Class
Pisces
(bear fins)
Tetrapoda
(bear limbs)
Class
1. Cyclostomata
Class
1. Chondrichthyes
2. Osteichthyes
Class
1. Amphibia
2. Reptilia
3. Aves
4. Mammals

4.2.11.1 Class – Cyclostomata

All living members of the class Cyclostomata are ectoparasites on some fishes. They have an elongated body bearing 6-15 pairs of **gill slits** for respiration. Cyclostomes have a sucking and circular mouth without jaws (Fig. 4.18). Their body is devoid of scales and paired fins. Cranium and vertebral column are cartilaginous. Circulation is of closed type. Cyclostomes are marine but migrate for spawning to fresh water. After spawning, within a few days, they die. Their larvae, after metamorphosis, return to the ocean.

Examples: *Petromyzon* (Lamprey) and *Myxine* (Hagfish).

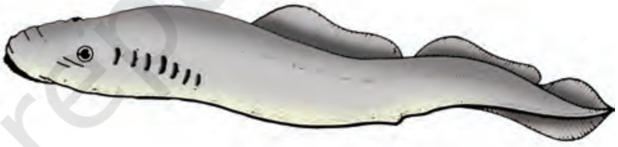
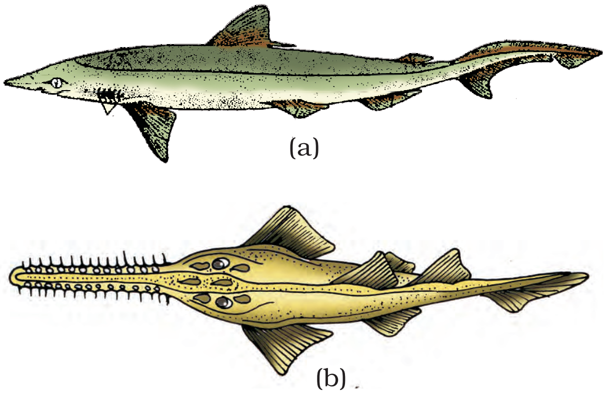


Figure 4.18 A jawless vertebrate - *Petromyzon*

4.2.11.2 Class – Chondrichthyes

They are marine animals with streamlined body and have cartilaginous endoskeleton (Figure 4.19). Mouth is located ventrally. **Notochord** is **persistent** throughout life. Gill slits are separate and without **operculum** (gill cover). The skin is tough, containing minute **placoid scales**. Teeth are modified placoid scales which are backwardly directed. Their jaws are very powerful. These animals are predaceous. Due to the absence of air bladder, they have to swim constantly to avoid sinking.



(a)

(b)

Figure 4.19 Example of Cartilaginous fishes : (a) *Scoliodon* (b) *Pristis*

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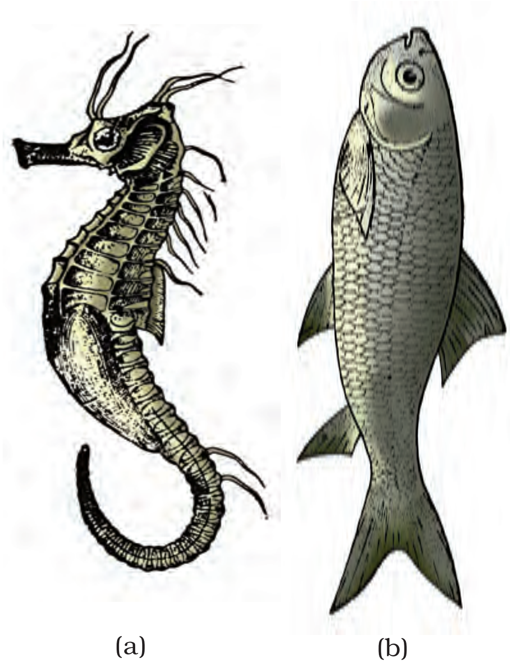
(a) (b)

Figure 4.20 Examples of Bony fishes : (a) *Hippocampus* (b) *Catla*

Heart is two-chambered (one auricle and one ventricle). Some of them have **electric organs** (e.g., *Torpedo*) and some possess **poison sting** (e.g., *Trygon*). They are cold-blooded (**poikilothermous**) animals, i.e., they lack the capacity to regulate their body temperature. Sexes are separate. In males pelvic fins bear claspers. They have internal fertilisation and many of them are viviparous.

Examples: *Scoliodon* (Dog fish), *Pristis* (Saw fish), *Carcharodon* (Great white shark), *Trygon* (Sting ray).

4.2.11.3 Class – Osteichthyes

It includes both marine and fresh water fishes with bony endoskeleton. Their body is streamlined. Mouth is mostly terminal (Figure 4.20). They have four pairs of gills which are covered by an **operculum** on each side. Skin is covered with cycloid/ctenoid scales. **Air bladder** is present which regulates buoyancy. Heart is two-chambered (one auricle and one ventricle). They are cold-blooded animals. Sexes are separate. Fertilisation is usually external. They are mostly oviparous and development is direct.

Examples: Marine – *Exocoetus* (Flying fish), *Hippocampus* (Sea horse); Freshwater – *Labeo* (Rohu), *Catla* (Katla), *Clarias* (Magur); Aquarium – *Betta* (Fighting fish), *Pterophyllum* (Angel fish).

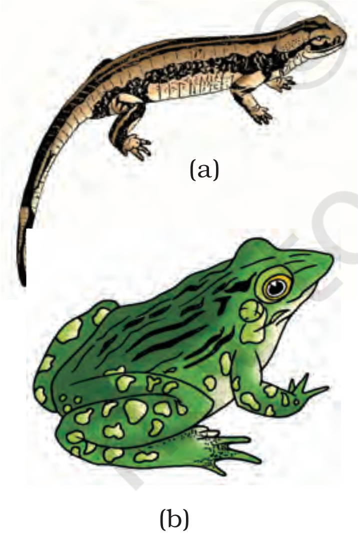
(a)
(b)

Figure 4.21 Examples of Amphibia :
(a) *Salamandra*
(b) *Rana*

4.2.11.4 Class – Amphibia

As the name indicates (*Gr., Amphi* : dual, *bios*, life), amphibians can live in aquatic as well as terrestrial habitats (Figure 4.21). Most of them have two pairs of limbs. Body is divisible into **head** and **trunk.** Tail may be present in some. The amphibian skin is moist (without scales). The eyes have eyelids. A **tympanum** represents the ear. Alimentary canal, urinary and reproductive tracts open into a common chamber called **cloaca** which opens to the exterior. Respiration is by gills, lungs and through skin. The heart is three-chambered (two auricles and one ventricle). These are cold-blooded animals. Sexes are separate. Fertilisation is external. They are oviparous and development is indirect.

Examples: *Bufo* (Toad), *Rana* (Frog), *Hyla* (Tree frog), *Salamandra* (Salamander), *Ichthyophis* (Limbless amphibia).

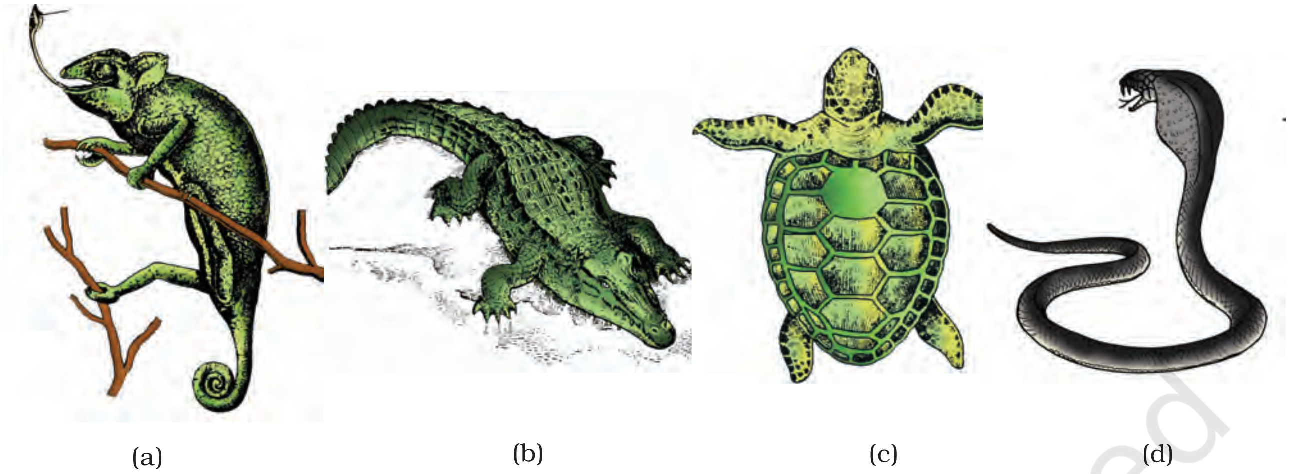

Figure 4.22 Reptiles: (a) *Chameleon* (b) *Crocodilus* (c) *Chelone* (d) *Naja*

4.2.11.5 Class – Reptilia

The class name refers to their creeping or crawling mode of locomotion (*Latin*, *repere* or *reptum*, to creep or crawl). They are mostly terrestrial animals and their body is covered by dry and cornified skin, epidermal **scales** or **scutes** (Fig. 4.22). They do not have external ear openings. Tympanum represents ear. Limbs, when present, are two pairs. Heart is usually three-chambered, but four-chambered in crocodiles. Reptiles are poikilotherms. Snakes and lizards shed their scales as skin cast. Sexes are separate. Fertilisation is internal. They are oviparous and development is direct.

Examples: *Chelone* (Turtle), *Testudo* (Tortoise), *Chameleon* (Tree lizard), *Calotes* (Garden lizard), *Crocodilus* (Crocodile), *Alligator* (Alligator). *Hemidactylus* (Wall lizard), Poisonous snakes – *Naja* (Cobra), *Bangarus* (Krait), *Vipera* (Viper).

4.2.11.6 Class – Aves

The characteristic features of Aves (birds) are the presence of **feathers** and most of them can fly except flightless birds (e.g., Ostrich). They possess **beak** (Figure 4.23). The forelimbs are modified into **wings**. The hind limbs generally have scales and are modified for walking, swimming or clasping the tree branches. Skin is dry without glands except the oil gland at the base of the tail. Endoskeleton is fully ossified (bony) and the long bones are hollow with **air cavities** (pneumatic). The digestive tract of birds has additional chambers, the crop and gizzard. Heart is completely four-chambered. They are warm-blooded (**homoiothermous**) animals, i.e., they are able to maintain a constant body temperature. Respiration is by

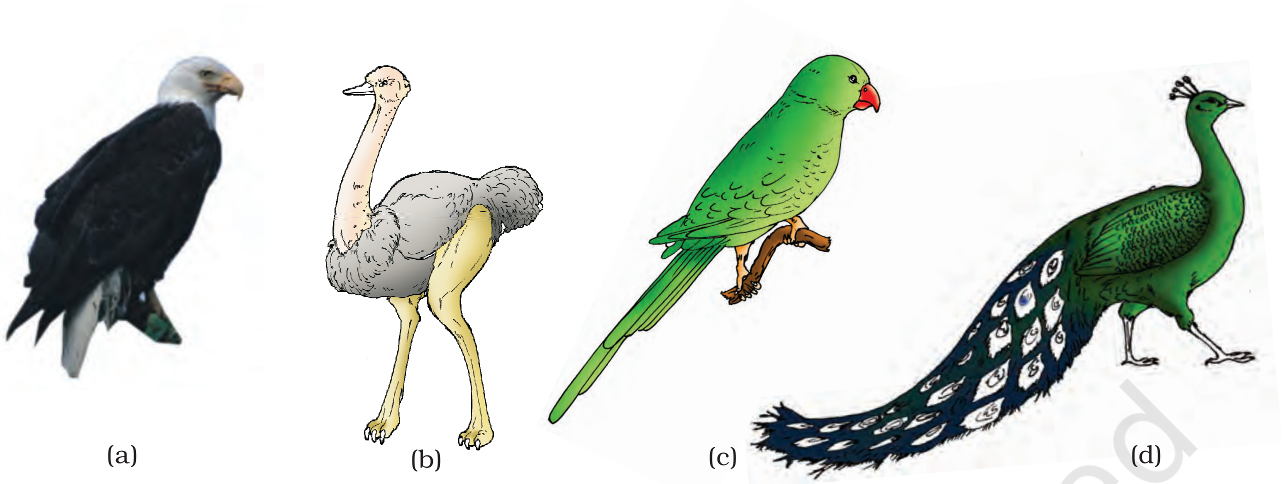

Figure 4.23 Some birds : (a) *Neophron* (b) *Struthio* (c) *Psittacula* (d) *Pavo*

lungs. Air sacs connected to lungs supplement respiration. Sexes are separate. Fertilisation is internal. They are oviparous and development is direct.

Examples : *Corvus* (Crow), *Columba* (Pigeon), *Psittacula* (Parrot), *Struthio* (Ostrich), *Pavo* (Peacock), *Aptenodytes* (Penguin), *Neophron* (Vulture).

4.2.11.7 Class – Mammalia

They are found in a variety of habitats – polar ice caps, deserts, mountains, forests, grasslands and dark caves. Some of them have adapted to fly or live in water. The most unique mammalian characteristic is the presence of milk producing glands (**mammary glands**) by which the young ones are nourished. They have two pairs of limbs, adapted for walking, running, climbing, burrowing, swimming or flying (Figure 4.24). The skin of

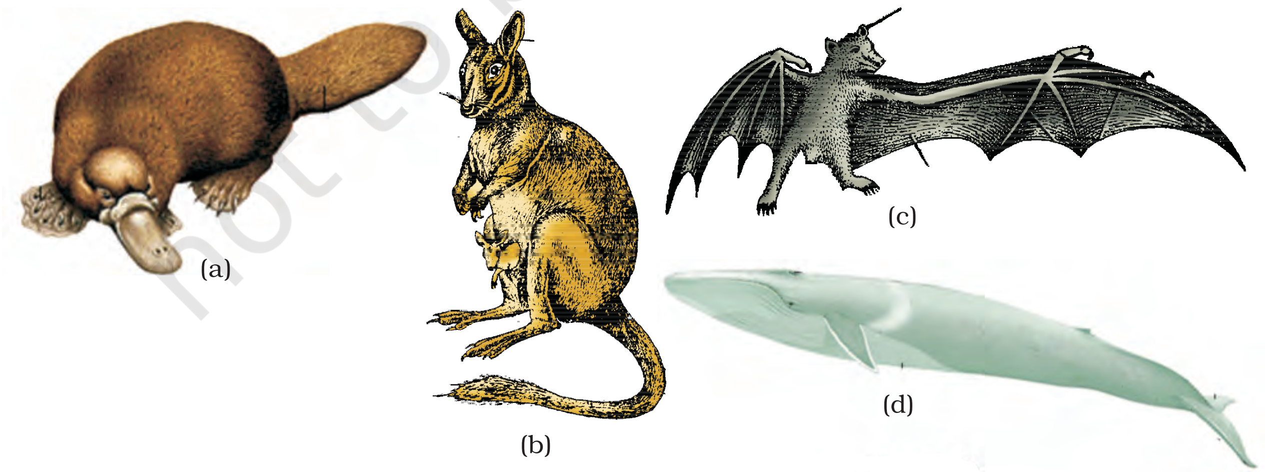

Figure 4.24 Some mammals : (a) *Ornithorhynchus* (b) *Macropus* (c) *Pteropus* (d) *Balaenoptera*

mammals is unique in possessing **hair**. External ears or **pinnae** are present. Different types of teeth are present in the jaw. Heart is four-chambered. They are homoiothermous. Respiration is by lungs. Sexes are separate and fertilisation is internal. They are viviparous with few exceptions and development is direct.

Examples: Oviparous-*Ornithorhynchus* (Platypus); Viviparous - *Macropus* (Kangaroo), *Pteropus* (Flying fox), *Camelus* (Camel), *Macaca* (Monkey), *Rattus* (Rat), *Canis* (Dog), *Felis* (Cat), *Elephas* (Elephant), *Equus* (Horse), *Delphinus* (Common dolphin), *Balaenoptera* (Blue whale), *Panthera tigris* (Tiger), *Panthera leo* (Lion).

The salient distinguishing features of all phyla under animal kingdom is comprehensively given in the Table 4.2.

TABLE 4.2 Salient Features of Different Phyla in the Animal Kingdom

Phylum	**Level of Organisation**	**Symmetry**	**Coelom**	**Segmentation**	**Digestive System**	**Circulatory System**	**Respiratory System**	**Distinctive Features**
Porifera	Cellular	Various	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Body with pores and canals in walls.
Coelenterata (Cnidaria)	Tissue	Radial	Absent	Absent	Incomplete	Absent	Absent	Cnidoblasts present.
Ctenophora	Tissue	Radial	Absent	Absent	Incomplete	Absent	Absent	Comb plates for locomotion.
Platyhelminthes	Organ & Organ-system	Bilateral	Absent	Absent	Incomplete	Absent	Absent	Flat body, suckers.
Aschelminthes	Organ-system	Bilateral	Pseudo coelomate	Absent	Complete	Absent	Absent	Often worm-shaped, elongated.
Annelida	Organ-system	Bilateral	Coelomate	Present	Complete	Present	Absent	Body segmentation like rings.
Arthropoda	Organ-system	Bilateral	Coelomate	Present	Complete	Present	Present	Exoskeleton of cuticle, jointed appendages.
Mollusca	Organ-system	Bilateral	Coelomate	Absent	Complete	Present	Present	External skeleton of shell usually present.
Echinodermata	Organ-system	Radial	Coelomate	Absent	Complete	Present	Present	Water vascular system, radial symmetry.
Hemichordata	Organ-system	Bilateral	Coelomate	Absent	Complete	Present	Present	Worm-like with proboscis, collar and trunk.
Chordata	Organ-system	Bilateral	Coelomate	Present	Complete	Present	Present	Notochord, dorsal hollow nerve cord, gill slits with limbs or fins.

SUMMARY

The basic fundamental features such as level of organisation, symmetry, cell organisation, coelom, segmentation, notochord, etc., have enabled us to broadly classify the animal kingdom. Besides the fundamental features, there are many other distinctive characters which are specific for each phyla or class.

Porifera includes multicellular animals which exhibit cellular level of organisation and have characteristic flagellated choanocytes. The coelenterates have tentacles and bear cnidoblasts. They are mostly aquatic, sessile or free-floating. The ctenophores are marine animals with comb plates. The platyhelminths have flat body and exhibit bilateral symmetry. The parasitic forms show distinct suckers and hooks. Aschelminthes are pseudocoelomates and include parasitic as well as non-parasitic roundworms.

Annelids are metamerically segmented animals with a true coelom. The arthropods are the most abundant group of animals characterised by the presence of jointed appendages. The molluscs have a soft body surrounded by an external calcareous shell. The body is covered with external skeleton made of chitin. The echinoderms possess a spiny skin. Their most distinctive feature is the presence of water vascular system. The hemichordates are a small group of worm-like marine animals. They have a cylindrical body with proboscis, collar and trunk.

Phylum Chordata includes animals which possess a notochord either throughout or during early embryonic life. Other common features observed in the chordates are the dorsal, hollow nerve cord and paired pharyngeal gill slits. Some of the vertebrates do not possess jaws (Agnatha) whereas most of them possess jaws (Gnathostomata). Agnatha is represented by the class, Cyclostomata. They are the most primitive chordates and are ectoparasites on fishes. Gnathostomata has two super classes, Pisces and Tetrapoda. Classes Chondrichthyes and Osteichthyes bear fins for locomotion and are grouped under Pisces. The Chondrichthyes are fishes with cartilaginous endoskeleton and are marine. Classes, Amphibia, Reptilia, Aves and Mammalia have two pairs of limbs and are thus grouped under Tetrapoda. The amphibians have adapted to live both on land and water. Reptiles are characterised by the presence of dry and cornified skin. Limbs are absent in snakes. Fishes, amphibians and reptiles are poikilothermous (cold-blooded). Aves are warm-blooded animals with feathers on their bodies and forelimbs modified into wings for flying. Hind limbs are adapted for walking, swimming, perching or clasping. The unique features of mammals are the presence of mammary glands and hairs on the skin. They commonly exhibit viviparity.

EXERCISES

1. What are the difficulties that you would face in classification of animals, if common fundamental features are not taken into account?
2. If you are given a specimen, what are the steps that you would follow to classify it?
3. How useful is the study of the nature of body cavity and coelom in the classification of animals?
4. Distinguish between intracellular and extracellular digestion?
5. What is the difference between direct and indirect development?
6. What are the peculiar features that you find in parasitic platyhelminthes?
7. What are the reasons that you can think of for the arthropods to constitute the largest group of the animal kingdom?
8. Water vascular system is the characteristic of which group of the following:

   (a) Porifera (b) Ctenophora (c) Echinodermata (d) Chordata
9. "All vertebrates are chordates but all chordates are not vertebrates". Justify the statement.
10. How important is the presence of air bladder in Pisces?
11. What are the modifications that are observed in birds that help them fly?
12. Could the number of eggs or young ones produced by an oviparous and viviparous mother be equal? Why?
13. Segmentation in the body is first observed in which of the following:

    (a) Platyhelminthes (b) Aschelminthes (c) Annelida (d) Arthropoda

14. Match the following:

(a)	Operculum	(i)	Ctenophora
(b)	Parapodia	(ii)	Mollusca
(c)	Scales	(iii)	Porifera
(d)	Comb plates	(iv)	Reptilia
(e)	Radula	(v)	Annelida
(f)	Hairs	(vi)	Cyclostomata and Chondrichthyes
(g)	Choanocytes	(vii)	Mammalia
(h)	Gill slits	(viii)	Osteichthyes

15. Prepare a list of some animals that are found parasitic on human beings.

UNIT 2

STRUCTURAL ORGANISATION IN PLANTS AND ANIMALS

Chapter 5
Morphology of Flowering Plants

Chapter 6
Anatomy of Flowering Plants

Chapter 7
Structural Organisation in Animals

The description of the diverse forms of life on earth was made only by observation – through naked eyes or later through magnifying lenses and microscopes. This description is mainly of gross structural features, both external and internal. In addition, observable and perceivable living phenomena were also recorded as part of this description. Before experimental biology or more specifically, physiology, was established as a part of biology, naturalists described only biology. Hence, biology remained as a natural history for a long time. The description, by itself, was amazing in terms of detail. While the initial reaction of a student could be boredom, one should keep in mind that the detailed description, was utilised in the later day reductionist biology where living processes drew more attention from scientists than the description of life forms and their structure. Hence, this description became meaningful and helpful in framing research questions in physiology or evolutionary biology. In the following chapters of this unit, the structural organisation of plants and animals, including the structural basis of physiologial or behavioural phenomena, is described. For convenience, this description of morphological and anatomical features is presented separately for plants and animals.

Katherine Esau
(1898 – 1997)

KATHERINE ESAU was born in Ukraine in 1898. She studied agriculture in Russia and Germany and received her doctorate in 1931 in United States. She reported in her early publications that the curly top virus spreads through a plant via the food-conducting or phloem tissue. Dr Esau's *Plant Anatomy* published in 1954 took a dynamic, developmental approach designed to enhance one's understanding of plant structure and an enormous impact worldwide, literally bringing about a revival of the discipline. The *Anatomy of Seed Plants* by Katherine Esau was published in 1960. It was referred to as Webster's of plant biology – it is encyclopediac. In 1957 she was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, becoming the sixth woman to receive that honour. In addition to this prestigious award, she received the National Medal of Science from President George Bush in 1989.

When Katherine Esau died in the year 1997, Peter Raven, director of Anatomy and Morphology, Missouri Botanical Garden, remembered that she 'absolutely dominated' the field of plant biology even at the age of 99.

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CHAPTER 5

MORPHOLOGY OF FLOWERING PLANTS

5.1 The Root

5.2 The Stem

5.3 The Leaf

5.4 The Inflorescence

5.5 The Flower

5.6 The Fruit

5.7 The Seed

5.8 Semi-technical Description of a Typical Flowering Plant

5.9 Description of Some Important Families

The wide range in the structure of higher plants will never fail to fascinate us. Even though the angiosperms show such a large diversity in external structure or **morphology**, they are all characterised by presence of roots, stems, leaves, flowers and fruits.

In chapters 2 and 3, we talked about classification of plants based on morphological and other characteristics. For any successful attempt at classification and at understanding any higher plant (or for that matter any living organism) we need to know standard technical terms and standard definitions. We also need to know about the possible variations in different parts, found as adaptations of the plants to their environment, e.g., adaptions to various habitats, for protection, climbing, storage, etc.

If you pull out any weed you will see that all of them have roots, stems and leaves. They may be bearing flowers and fruits. The underground part of the flowering plant is the root system while the portion above the ground forms the shoot system (Figure 5.1).

5.1 THE ROOT

In majority of the dicotyledonous plants, the direct elongation of the radicle leads to the formation of **primary root** which grows inside the soil. It bears lateral roots of several orders that are referred to as **secondary, tertiary,** etc. **roots.** The primary roots and its branches constitute the

tap root system, as seen in the mustard plant (Figure 5.2a). In monocotyledonous plants, the primary root is short lived and is replaced by a large number of roots. These roots originate from the base of the stem and constitute the **fibrous root system**, as seen in the wheat plant (Figure 5.2b). In some plants, like grass, *Monstera* and the banyan tree, roots arise from parts of the plant other than the radicle and are called **adventitious roots** (Figure 5.2c). The main functions of the root system are absorption of water and minerals from the soil, providing a proper anchorage to the plant parts, storing reserve food material and synthesis of plant growth regulators.

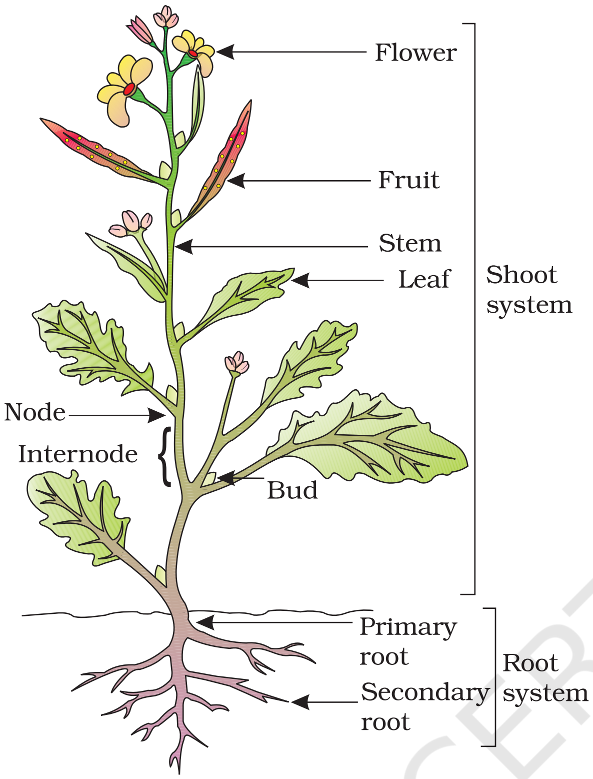
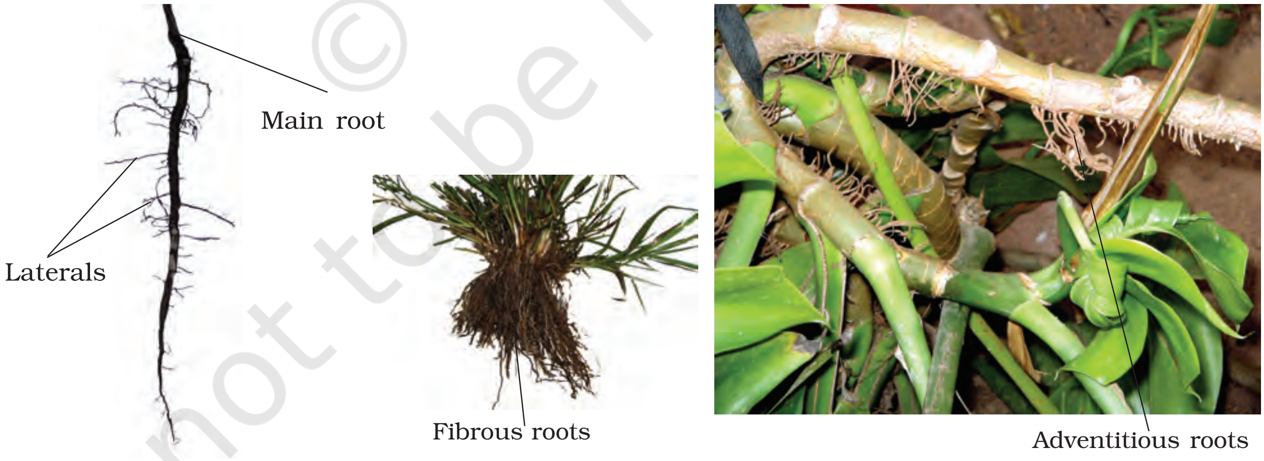

Flower
Fruit
Stem
Leaf
Shoot system
Node
Internode
Bud
Primary root
Secondary root
Root system

Figure 5.1 Parts of a flowering plant


Main root
Laterals
Fibrous roots
Adventitious roots

(a) (b) (c)

Figure 5.2 Different types of roots : (a) Tap (b) Fibrous (c) Adventitious

5.1.1 Regions of the Root

The root is covered at the apex by a thimble-like structure called the **root cap** (Figure 5.3). It protects the tender apex of the root as it makes its way through the soil. A few millimetres above the root cap is the **region of meristematic activity**. The cells of this region are very small, thin-walled and with dense protoplasm. They divide repeatedly. The cells proximal to this region undergo rapid elongation and enlargement and are responsible for the growth of the root in length. This region is called the **region of elongation**. The cells of the elongation zone gradually differentiate and mature. Hence, this zone, proximal to region of elongation, is called the **region of maturation**. From this region some of the epidermal cells form very fine and delicate, thread-like structures called **root hairs**. These root hairs absorb water and minerals from the soil.

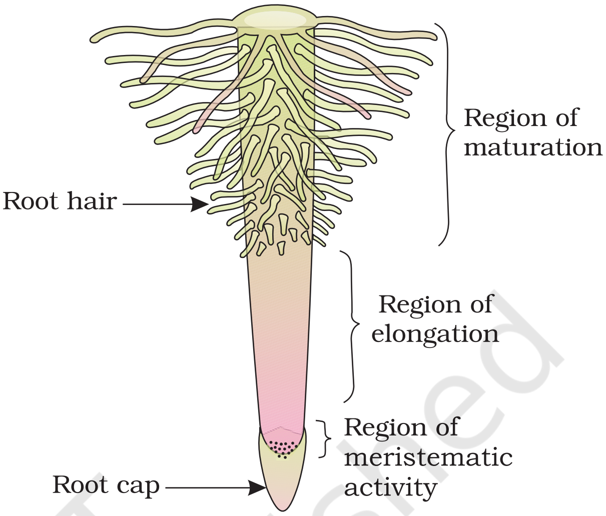


Figure 5.3 The regions of the root-tip

5.2 THE STEM

What are the features that distinguish a stem from a root? The stem is the ascending part of the axis bearing branches, leaves, flowers and fruits. It develops from the plumule of the embryo of a germinating seed. The stem bears **nodes** and **internodes**. The region of the stem where leaves are born are called nodes while internodes are the portions between two nodes. The stem bears buds, which may be terminal or axillary. Stem is generally green when young and later often become woody and dark brown.

The main function of the stem is spreading out branches bearing leaves, flowers and fruits. It conducts water, minerals and photosynthates. Some stems perform the function of storage of food, support, protection and of vegetative propagation.

5.3 THE LEAF

The leaf is a lateral, generally flattened structure borne on the stem. It develops at the node and bears a bud in its axil. The **axillary bud** later develops into a branch. Leaves originate from shoot apical meristems and are arranged in an acropetal order. They are the most important vegetative organs for photosynthesis.

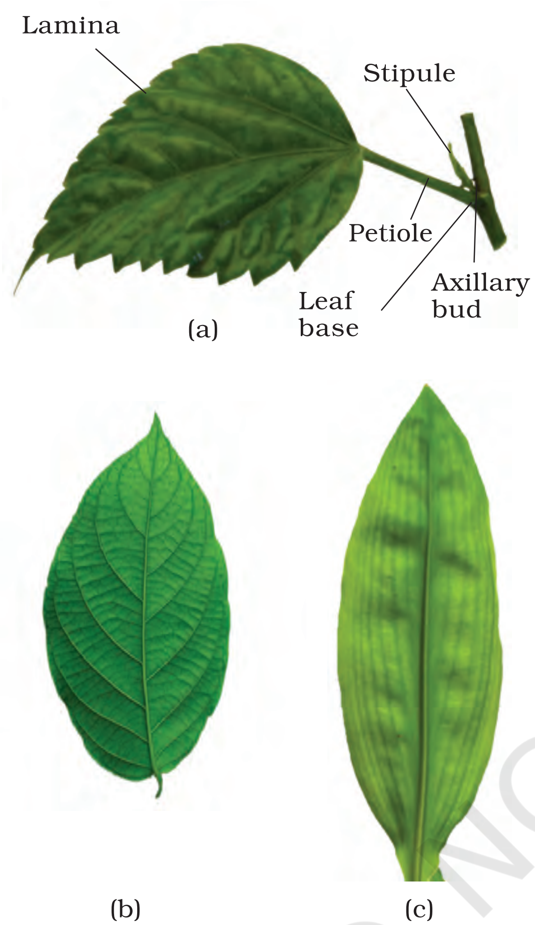


Figure 5.4 Structure of a leaf :
(a) Parts of a leaf
(b) Reticulate venation
(c) Parallel venation

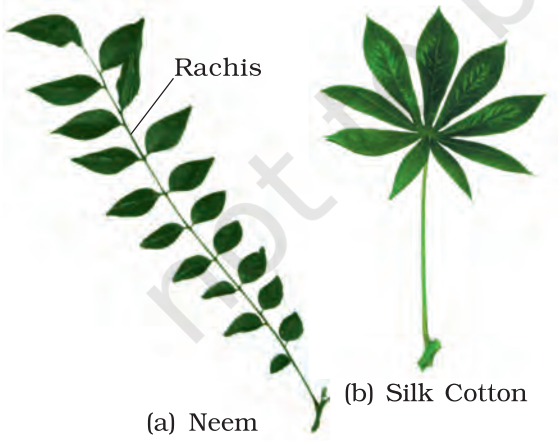


Figure 5.5 Compound leaves :
(a) pinnately compound leaf
(b) palmately compound leaf

A typical leaf consists of three main parts: leaf base, petiole and lamina (Figure 5.4 a). The leaf is attached to the stem by the **leaf base** and may bear two lateral small leaf like structures called stipules. In monocotyledons, the leaf base expands into a sheath covering the stem partially or wholly. In some leguminous plants the leafbase may become swollen, which is called the **pulvinus**. The **petiole** help hold the blade to light. Long thin flexible petioles allow leaf blades to flutter in wind, thereby cooling the leaf and bringing fresh air to leaf surface. The **lamina** or the **leaf blade** is the green expanded part of the leaf with veins and veinlets. There is, usually, a middle prominent vein, which is known as the midrib. Veins provide rigidity to the leaf blade and act as channels of transport for water, minerals and food materials. The shape, margin, apex, surface and extent of incision of lamina varies in different leaves.

5.3.1 Venation

The arrangement of veins and the veinlets in the lamina of leaf is termed as **venation**. When the veinlets form a network, the venation is termed as **reticulate** (Figure 5.4 b). When the veins run parallel to each other within a lamina, the venation is termed as **parallel** (Figure 5.4 c). Leaves of dicotyledonous plants generally possess reticulate venation, while parallel venation is the characteristic of most monocotyledons.

5.3.2 Types of Leaves

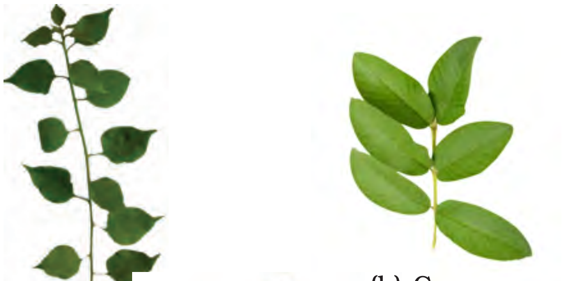
A leaf is said to be **simple**, when its lamina is entire or when incised, the incisions do not touch the midrib. When the incisions of the lamina reach up to the midrib breaking it into a number of leaflets, the leaf is called **compound**. A bud is present in the axil of petiole in both simple and compound leaves, but not in the axil of leaflets of the compound leaf.

The compound leaves may be of two types (Figure 5.5). In a **pinnately compound leaf** a number of leaflets are present on a common axis, the **rachis**, which represents the midrib of the leaf as in neem.

In **palmately compound leaves,** the leaflets are attached at a common point, i.e., at the tip of petiole, as in silk cotton.

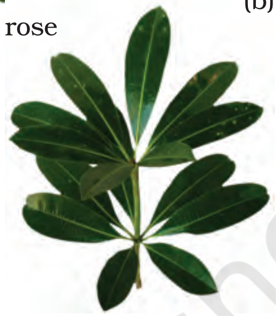
5.3.3 Phyllotaxy

Phyllotaxy is the pattern of arrangement of leaves on the stem or branch. This is usually of three types – alternate, opposite and whorled (Figure 5.6). In **alternate** type of phyllotaxy, a single leaf arises at each node in alternate manner, as in china rose, mustard and sun flower plants. In **opposite** type, a pair of leaves arise at each node and lie opposite to each other as in *Calotropis* and guava plants. If more than two leaves arise at a node and form a whorl, it is called **whorled,** as in *Alstonia.*



(a) China rose

(b) Guava



(c) Alstonia

Figure 5.6 Different types of phyllotaxy :
(a) Alternate (b) Opposite
(c) Whorled

5.4 THE INFLORESCENCE

A flower is a modified shoot wherein the shoot apical meristem changes to floral meristem. Internodes do not elongate and the axis gets condensed. The apex produces different kinds of floral appendages laterally at successive nodes instead of leaves. When a shoot tip transforms into a flower, it is always solitary. The arrangement of flowers on the floral axis is termed as **inflorescence**. Depending on whether the apex gets developed into a flower or continues to grow, two major types of inflorescences are defined – racemose and cymose. In **racemose** type of inflorescences the main axis continues to grow, the flowers are borne laterally in an acropetal succession (Figure 5.7).

In **cymose** type of inflorescence the main axis terminates in a flower, hence is limited in growth.The flowers are borne in a basipetal order (Figure 5.8).

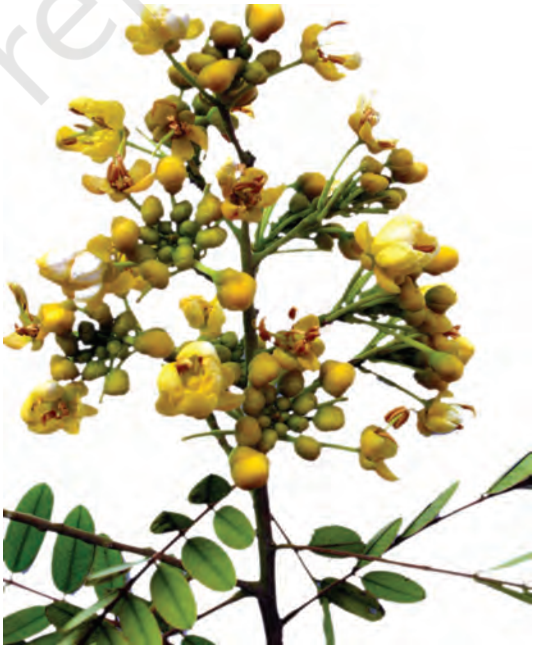


Figure 5.7 Racemose inflorescence

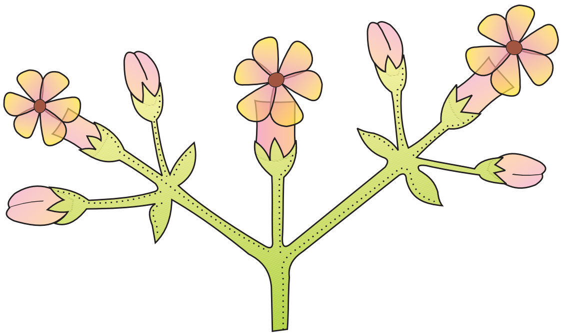


Figure 5.8 Cymose inflorescence

5.5 THE FLOWER

The flower is the reproductive unit in the angiosperms. It is meant for sexual reproduction. A typical flower has four different kinds of whorls arranged successively on the swollen end of the stalk or pedicel, called **thalamus or receptacle**. These are calyx, corolla, androecium and gynoecium. Calyx and corolla are accessory organs, while androecium and gynoecium are reproductive organs. In some flowers like lily, the calyx and corolla are not distinct and are termed as perianth. When a flower has both androecium and gynoecium, it is **bisexual**. A flower having either only stamens or only carpels is **unisexual.**

In symmetry, the flower may be **actinomorphic** (radial symmetry) or **zygomorphic** (bilateral symmetry). When a flower can be divided into two equal radial halves in any radial plane passing through the centre, it is said to be **actinomorphic,** e.g., mustard, *datura*, chilli. When it can be divided into two similar halves only in one particular vertical plane, it is **zygomorphic,** e.g., pea, gulmohur, bean, *Cassia*. A flower is **asymmetric** (irregular) if it cannot be divided into two similar halves by any vertical plane passing through the centre, as in canna.

A flower may be **trimerous, tetramerous** or **pentamerous** when the floral appendages are in multiple of 3, 4 or 5, respectively. Flowers with bracts-reduced leaf found at the base of the pedicel-are called **bracteate** and those without bracts, **ebracteate**.

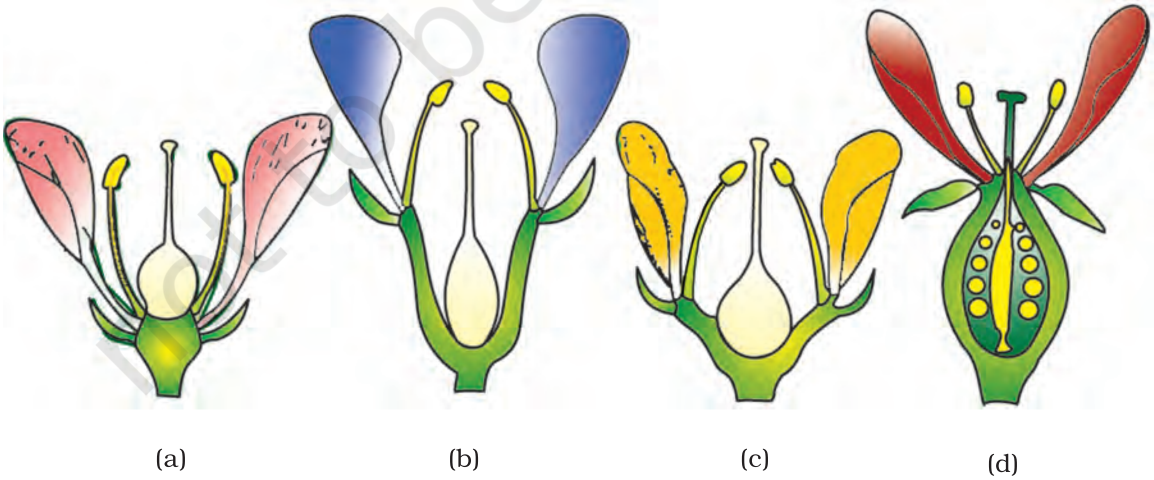


Figure 5.9 Position of floral parts on thalamus : (a) Hypogynous (b) and (c) Perigynous (d) Epigynous

Based on the position of calyx, corolla and androecium in respect of the ovary on thalamus, the flowers are described as hypogynous, perigynous and epigynous (Figure 5.9). In the **hypogynous** flower the gynoecium occupies the highest position while the other parts are situated below it. The ovary in such flowers is said to be **superior,** e.g., mustard, china rose and brinjal. If gynoecium is situated in the centre and other parts of the flower are located on the rim of the thalamus almost at the same level, it is called **perigynous.** The ovary here is said to be **half inferior,** e.g., plum, rose, peach. In **epigynous flowers,** the margin of thalamus grows upward enclosing the ovary completely and getting fused with it, the other parts of flower arise above the ovary. Hence, the ovary is said to be **inferior** as in flowers of guava and cucumber, and the ray florets of sunflower.

5.5.1 Parts of a Flower

Each flower normally has four floral whorls, viz., calyx, corolla, androecium and gynoecium (Figure 5.10).

5.5.1.1 Calyx

The calyx is the outermost whorl of the flower and the members are called sepals. Generally, sepals are green, leaf like and protect the flower in the bud stage. The calyx may be **gamosepalous** (sepals united) or **polysepalous** (sepals free).

5.5.1.2 Corolla

Corolla is composed of petals. Petals are usually brightly coloured to attract insects for pollination. Like calyx, corolla may also be **gamopetalous** (petals united) or **polypetalous** (petals free). The shape and colour of corolla vary greatly in plants. Corolla may be tubular, bell-shaped, funnel-shaped or wheel-shaped.

Aestivation: The mode of arrangement of sepals or petals in floral bud with respect to the other members of the same whorl is known as aestivation. The main types of aestivation are valvate, twisted, imbricate

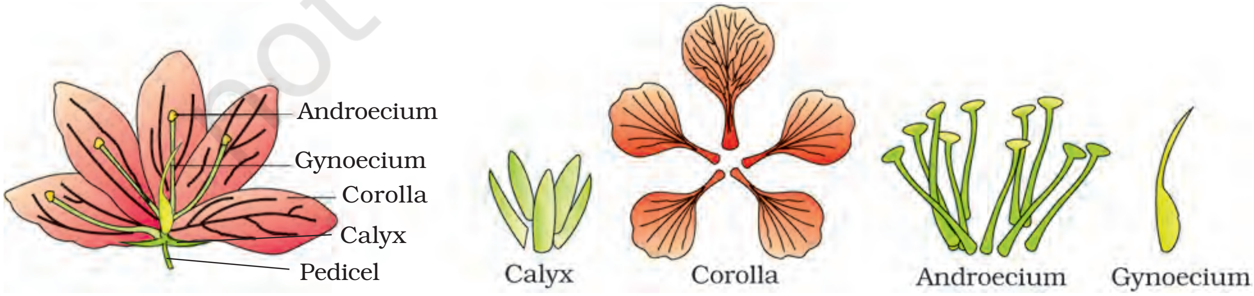


Figure 5.10 Parts of a flower

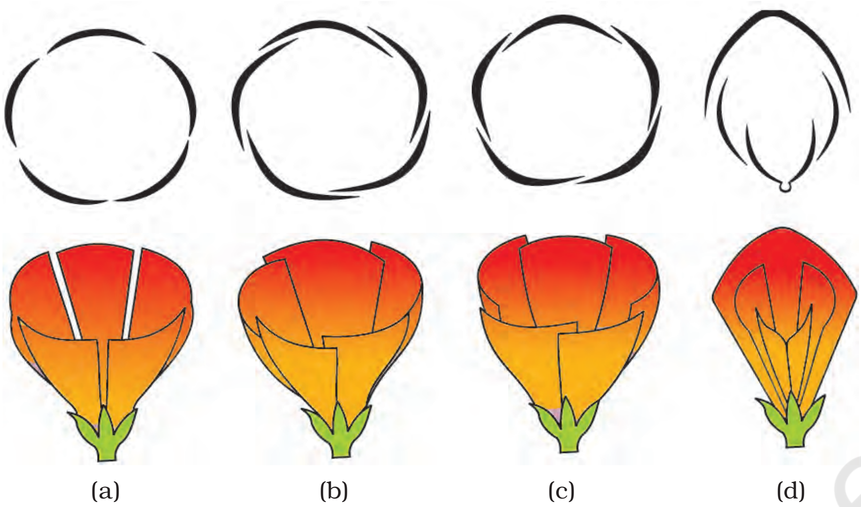


Figure 5.11 Types of aestivation in corolla : (a) Valvate (b) Twisted (c) Imbricate (d) Vexillary

and vexillary (Figure 5.11). When sepals or petals in a whorl just touch one another at the margin, without overlapping, as in *Calotropis*, it is said to be **valvate.** If one margin of the appendage overlaps that of the next one and so on as in china rose, lady's finger and cotton, it is called **twisted**. If the margins of sepals or petals overlap one another but not in any particular direction as in *Cassia* and gulmohur, the aestivation is called **imbricate**. In pea and bean flowers, there are five petals, the largest (standard) overlaps the two lateral petals (wings) which in turn overlap the two smallest anterior petals (keel); this type of aestivation is known as **vexillary** or papilionaceous.

5.5.1.3 Androecium

Androecium is composed of stamens. Each stamen which represents the male reproductive organ consists of a stalk or a filament and an anther. Each anther is usually bilobed and each lobe has two chambers, the pollen-sacs. The pollen grains are produced in pollen-sacs. A sterile stamen is called **staminode**.

Stamens of flower may be united with other members such as petals or among themselves. When stamens are attached to the petals, they are **epipetalous** as in brinjal, or **epiphyllous** when attached to the perianth as in the flowers of lily. The stamens in a flower may either remain free (polyandrous) or may be united in varying degrees. The stamens may be united into one bunch or one bundle **(monoadelphous)** as in china rose, or two bundles **(diadelphous)** as in pea, or into more than two bundles **(polyadelphous)** as in citrus. There may be a variation in the length of filaments within a flower, as in *Salvia* and mustard.

5.5.1.4 Gynoecium

Gynoecium is the female reproductive part of the flower and is made up of one or more carpels. A carpel consists of three parts namely stigma, style and ovary. **Ovary** is the enlarged basal part, on which lies the elongated tube, the style. The style connects the ovary to the stigma. The **stigma** is usually at the tip of the **style** and is the receptive surface for pollen grains. Each ovary bears one or more ovules attached to a flattened, cushion-like **placenta**. When more than one carpel is present, they may be free (as in lotus and rose) and are called **apocarpous**. They are termed **syncarpous** when carpels are fused, as in mustard and tomato. After fertilisation, the ovules develop into seeds and the ovary matures into a fruit.

Placentation: The arrangement of ovules within the ovary is known as placentation. The placentation are of different types namely, marginal, axile, parietal, basal, central and free central (Figure 5.12). In **marginal** placentation the placenta forms a ridge along the ventral suture of the ovary and the ovules are borne on this ridge forming two rows, as in pea. When the placenta is axial and the ovules are attached to it in a multilocular ovary, the placentaion is said to be **axile**, as in china rose, tomato and lemon. In **parietal** placentation, the ovules develop on the inner wall of the ovary or on peripheral part. Ovary is one-chambered but it becomes two-chambered due to the formation of the false septum, e.g., mustard and *Argemone*. When the ovules are borne on central axis and septa are absent, as in *Dianthus* and *Primrose* the placentation is called **free central.** In **basal** placentation, the placenta develops at the base of ovary and a single ovule is attached to it, as in sunflower, marigold.

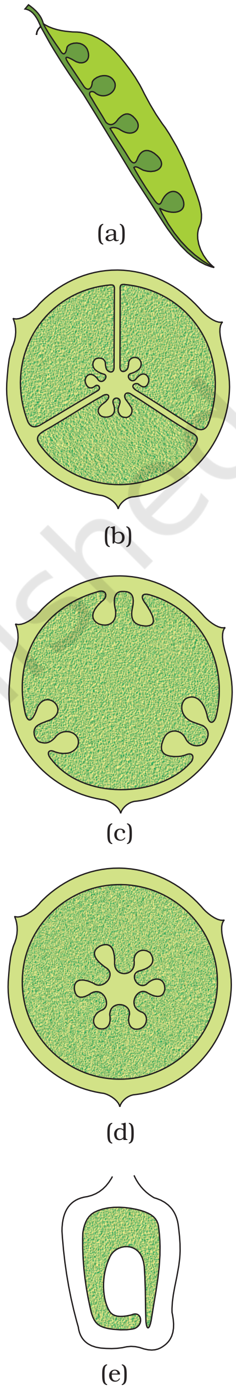


Figure 5.12 Types of placentation :
(a) Marginal
(b) Axile
(c) Parietal
(d) Free central
(e) Basal

5.6 THE FRUIT

The fruit is a characteristic feature of the flowering plants. It is a mature or ripened ovary, developed after fertilisation. If a fruit is formed without fertilisation of the ovary, it is called a **parthenocarpic** fruit.

Generally, the fruit consists of a wall or **pericarp** and seeds. The pericarp may be dry or fleshy. When pericarp is thick and fleshy, it is differentiated into the outer **epicarp,** the middle **mesocarp** and the inner **endocarp**.

In mango and coconut, the fruit is known as a drupe (Figure 5.13). They develop from monocarpellary superior ovaries and are one seeded. In mango the pericarp is well differentiated into an

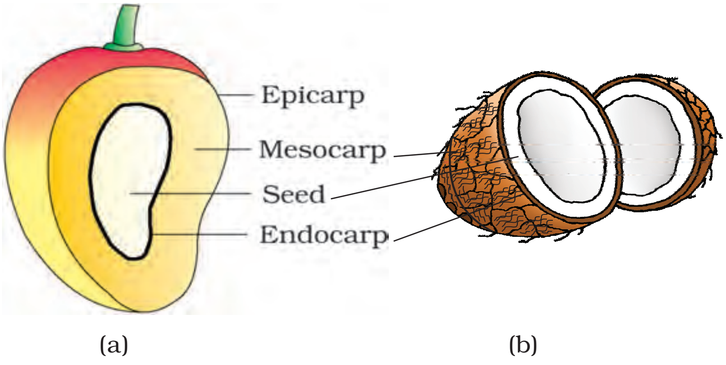


Figure 5.13 Parts of a fruit : (a) Mango (b) Coconut

outer thin epicarp, a middle fleshy edible mesocarp and an inner stony hard endocarp. In coconut which is also a drupe, the mesocarp is fibrous.

5.7 THE SEED

The ovules after fertilisation, develop into seeds. A seed is made up of a seed coat and an embryo. The embryo is made up of a radicle, an embryonal axis and one (as in wheat, maize) or two cotyledons (as in gram and pea).

5.7.1 Structure of a Dicotyledonous Seed

The outermost covering of a seed is the seed coat. The seed coat has two layers, the outer **testa** and the inner **tegmen**. The **hilum** is a scar on the seed coat through which the developing seeds were attached to the fruit. Above the hilum is a small pore called the **micropyle**. Within the seed coat is the embryo, consisting of an embryonal axis and two cotyledons. The cotyledons are often fleshy and full of reserve food materials. At the two ends of the embryonal axis are present the radicle and the plumule (Figure 5.14). In some seeds such as castor the **endosperm** formed as a result of double fertilisation, is a food storing tissue and called endospermic seeds. In plants such as bean, gram and pea, the endosperm is not present in mature seeds and such seeds are called non-endospermous.

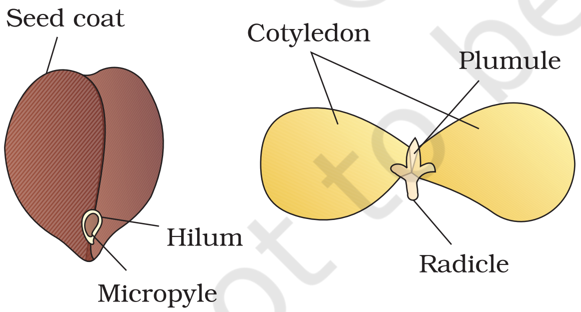


Figure 5.14 Structure of dicotyledonous seed

5.7.2 Structure of Monocotyledonous Seed

Generally, monocotyledonous seeds are endospermic but some as in orchids are non-endospermic. In the seeds of cereals such as maize the

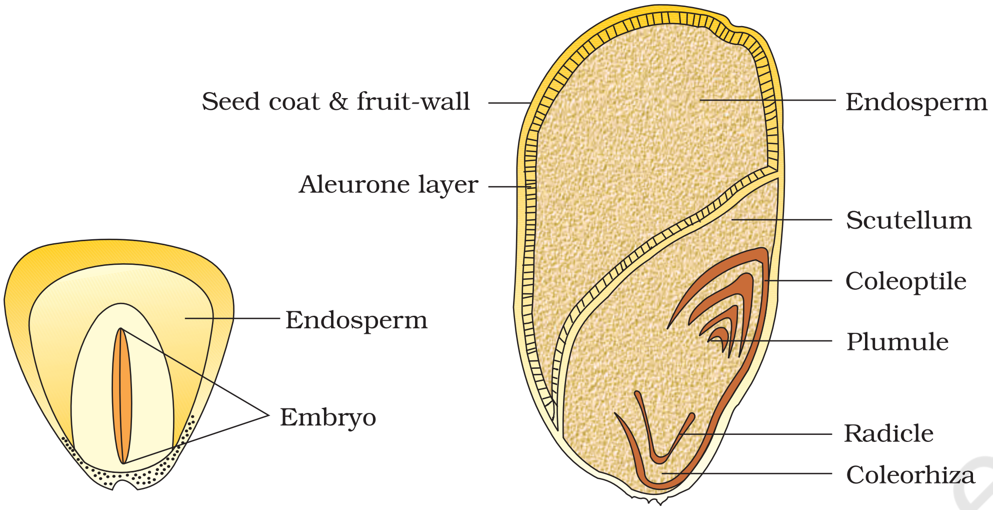
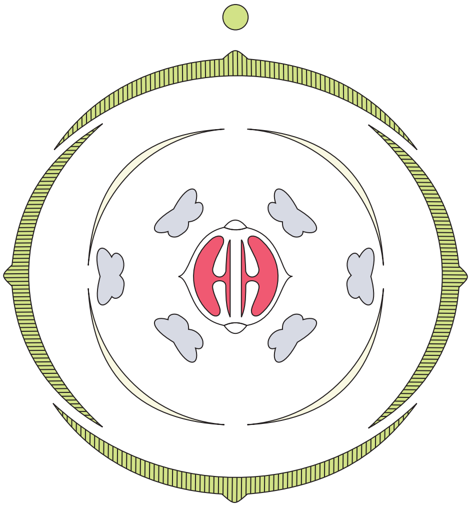


Figure 5.15 Structure of a monocotyledonous seed

seed coat is membranous and generally fused with the fruit wall. The endosperm is bulky and stores food. The outer covering of endosperm separates the embryo by a proteinous layer called **aleurone layer**. The embryo is small and situated in a groove at one end of the endosperm. It consists of one large and shield shaped cotyledon known as **scutellum** and a short axis with a **plumule** and a **radicle**. The plumule and radicle are enclosed in sheaths which are called **coleoptile** and **coleorhiza** respectively (Figure 5.15).

5.8 SEMI-TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION OF A TYPICAL FLOWERING PLANT

Various morphological features are used to describe a flowering plant. The description has to be brief, in a simple and scientific language and presented in a proper sequence. The plant is described beginning with its habit, vegetative characters – roots, stem and leaves and then floral characters inflorescence and flower parts. After describing various parts of plant, a floral diagram and a floral formula are presented. The floral formula is represented by some symbols. In the floral formula, **Br** stands for bracteate **K** stands for calyx , **C** for corolla, **P** for perianth, **A** for androecium and **G** for Gynoecium, $\underline{\mathbf{G}}$ for superior ovary and $\overline{\mathbf{G}}$ for inferior ovary, ♂ for male, ♀ for female, ⚥ for bisexual plants, ⊕ for actinomorphic



$\oplus$ ⚥ $K_{2+2}\ C_4\ A_{2+4}\ \underline{G}_{(2)}$

Figure 5.16 Floral diagram with floral formula

and $^{0}/_{0}$ for zygomorphic nature of flower. Fusion is indicated by enclosing the figure within bracket and adhesion by a line drawn above the symbols of the floral parts. A floral diagram provides information about the number of parts of a flower, their arrangement and the relation they have with one another (Figure 5.16). The position of the mother axis with respect to the flower is represented by a dot on the top of the floral diagram. Calyx, corolla, androecium and gynoecium are drawn in successive whorls, calyx being the outermost and the gynoecium being in the centre. Floral formula also shows cohesion and adhesion within parts of whorls and between whorls. The floral diagram and floral formula in Figure 5.16 represents the mustard plant (Family: Brassicaceae).

5.9 SOLANACEAE

It is a large family, commonly called as the 'potato family'. It is widely distributed in tropics, subtropics and even temperate zones (Figure 5.17).

Vegetative Characters

Plants mostly herbs, shrubs and rarely small trees

Stem: herbaceous rarely woody, aerial; erect, cylindrical, branched, solid or hollow, hairy or glabrous, underground stem in potato (*Solanum tuberosum*)

Leaves: alternate, simple, rarely pinnately compound, exstipulate; venation reticulate

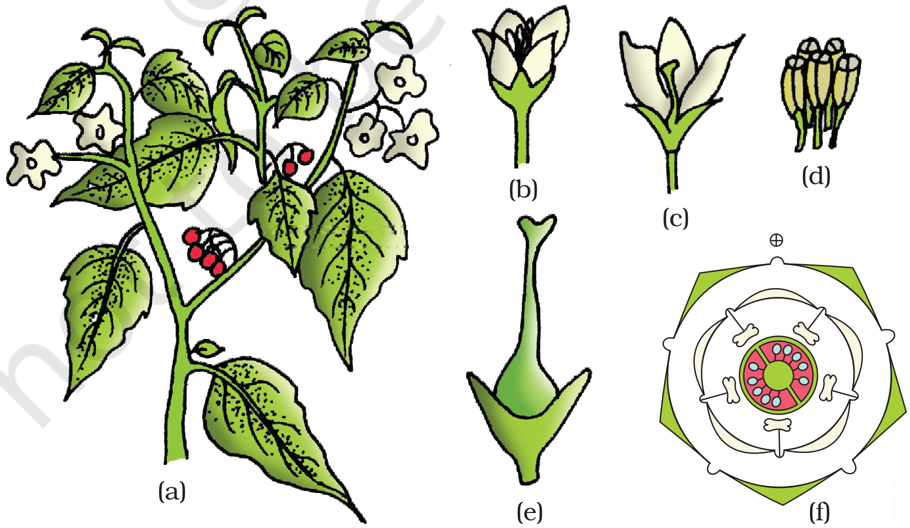


Figure 5.17 *Solanum nigrum* (makoi) plant : (a) Flowering twig (b) Flower (c) L.S. of flower (d) Stamens (e) Carpel (f) Floral diagram

Floral Characters

Inflorescence : Solitary, axillary or cymose as in *Solanum*
Flower: bisexual, actinomorphic
Calyx: sepals five, united, persistent, valvate aestivation
Corolla: petals five, united; valvate aestivation
Androecium: stamens five, epipetalous
Gynoecium: bicarpellary obligately placed, syncarpous; ovary superior, bilocular, placenta swollen with many ovules, axile
Fruits: berry or capsule
Seeds: many, endospermous
Floral Formula: $\oplus\,\text{⚥}\,K_{(5)}\;\overparen{C_{(5)}\;A_{5}}\;\underline{G}_{(2)}$

Economic Importance

Many plants belonging to this family are source of food (tomato, brinjal, potato), spice (chilli); medicine (belladonna, *ashwagandha*); fumigatory (tobacco); ornamentals (petunia).

SUMMARY

Flowering plants exhibit enormous variation in shape, size, structure, mode of nutrition, life span, habit and habitat. They have well developed root and shoot systems. Root system is either tap root or fibrous. Generally, dicotyledonous plants have tap roots while monocotyledonous plants have fibrous roots. The roots in some plants get modified for storage of food, mechanical support and respiration. The shoot system is differentiated into stem, leaves, flowers and fruits. The morphological features of stems like the presence of nodes and internodes, multicellular hair and positively phototropic nature help to differentiate the stems from roots. Leaf is a lateral outgrowth of stem developed exogeneously at the node. These are green in colour to perform the function of photosynthesis. Leaves exhibit marked variations in their shape, size, margin, apex and extent of incisions of leaf blade (lamina).

The flower is a modified shoot, meant for sexual reproduction. The flowers are arranged in different types of inflorescences. They exhibit enormous variation in structure, symmetry, position of ovary in relation to other parts, arrangement of petals, sepals, ovules etc. After fertilisation, the ovary is modified into fruits and ovules into seeds. Seeds either may be monocotyledonous or dicotyledonous. They vary in shape, size and period of viability. The floral characteristics form the basis of classification and identification of flowering plants. This can be illustrated through semi-technical descriptions of families. Hence, a flowering plant is described in a definite sequence by using scientific terms. The floral features are represented in the summarised form as floral diagrams and floral formula.

EXERCISES

1. How is a pinnately compound leaf different from a palmately compound leaf?
2. Explain with suitable examples the different types of phyllotaxy.
3. Define the following terms:
   (a) aestivation (b) placentation (c) actinomorphic
   (d) zygomorphic (e) superior ovary (f) perigynous flower
   (g) epipetalous stamen
4. Differentiate between
   (a) Racemose and cymose inflorescence
   (b) Apocarpous and syncarpous ovary
5. Draw the labelled diagram of the following:
   (i) gram seed (ii) V.S. of maize seed
6. Take one flower of the family Solanaceae and write its semi-technical description. Also draw their floral diagram.
7. Describe the various types of placentations found in flowering plants.
8. What is a flower? Describe the parts of a typical angiosperm flower.
9. Define the term inflorescence. Explain the basis for the different types inflorescence in flowering plants.
10. Describe the arrangement of floral members in relation to their insertion on thalamus.

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CHAPTER 6

ANATOMY OF FLOWERING PLANTS

6.1 The Tissue System

6.2 Anatomy of Dicotyledonous and Monocotyledonous Plants

You can very easily see the structural similarities and variations in the external morphology of the larger living organism, both plants and animals. Similarly, if we were to study the internal structure, one also finds several similarities as well as differences. This chapter introduces you to the internal structure and functional organisation of higher plants. Study of internal structure of plants is called anatomy. Plants have cells as the basic unit, cells are organised into tissues and in turn the tissues are organised into organs. Different organs in a plant show differences in their internal structure. Within angiosperms, the monocots and dicots are also seen to be anatomically different. Internal structures also show adaptations to diverse environments.

6.1 THE TISSUE SYSTEM

We were discussing types of tissues based on the types of cells present. Let us now consider how tissues vary depending on their location in the plant body. Their structure and function would also be dependent on location. On the basis of their structure and location, there are three types of tissue systems. These are the epidermal tissue system, the ground or fundamental tissue system and the vascular or conducting tissue system.

6.1.1 Epidermal Tissue System

The epidermal tissue system forms the outer-most covering of the whole plant body and comprises epidermal cells, stomata and the epidermal appendages – the trichomes and hairs. The **epidermis** is the outermost layer of the primary plant body. It is made up of elongated, compactly arranged cells, which form a continuous layer. Epidermis is usually single-layered. Epidermal cells are parenchymatous with a small amount of cytoplasm lining the cell wall and a large vacuole. The outside of the epidermis is often covered with a waxy thick layer called the **cuticle** which prevents the loss of water. Cuticle is absent in roots. **Stomata** are structures present in the epidermis of leaves. Stomata regulate the process of transpiration and gaseous exchange. Each stoma is composed of two bean-shaped cells known as **guard cells** which enclose stomatal pore**.** In grasses, the guard cells are dumb-bell shaped. The outer walls of guard cells (away from the stomatal pore) are thin and the inner walls (towards the stomatal pore) are highly thickened. The guard cells possess chloroplasts and regulate the opening and closing of stomata. Sometimes, a few epidermal cells, in the vicinity of the guard cells become specialised in their shape and size and are known as **subsidiary cells**. The stomatal aperture, guard cells and the surrounding subsidiary cells are together called **stomatal apparatus** (Figure 6.1).

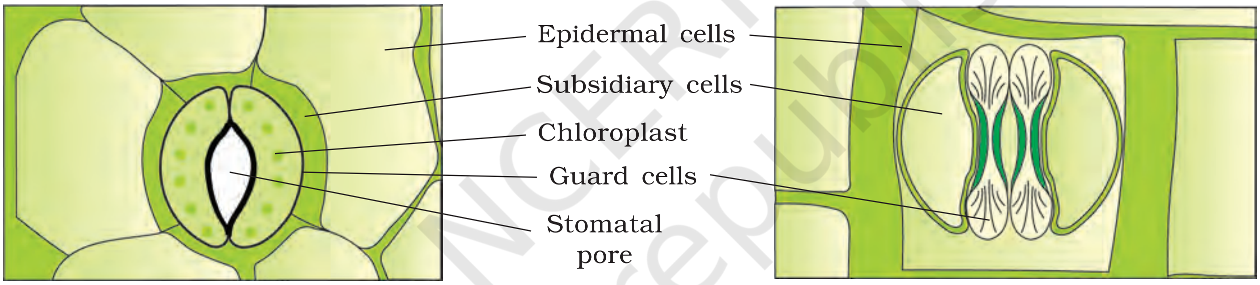

Figure 6.1 Diagrammatic representation: (a) stomata with bean-shaped guard cells (b) stomata with dumb-bell shaped guard cell

The cells of epidermis bear a number of hairs. The **root hairs** are unicellular elongations of the epidermal cells and help absorb water and minerals from the soil. On the stem the epidermal hairs are called **trichomes**. The trichomes in the shoot system are usually multicellular. They may be branched or unbranched and soft or stiff. They may even be secretory. The trichomes help in preventing water loss due to transpiration.

6.1.2 The Ground Tissue System

All tissues except epidermis and vascular bundles constitute the **ground tissue**. It consists of simple tissues such as parenchyma, collenchyma and sclerenchyma. Parenchymatous cells are usually present in cortex, pericycle, pith and medullary rays, in the primary stems and roots. In leaves, the ground tissue consists of thin-walled chloroplast containing cells and is called **mesophyll**.

6.1.3 The Vascular Tissue System

The vascular system consists of complex tissues, the phloem and the xylem.The xylem and phloem together constitute vascular bundles (Figure 6.2). In dicotyledonous stems, **cambium** is present between phloem and xylem. Such vascular bundles because of the presence of cambium possess the ability to form secondary xylem and phloem tissues, and hence are called **open vascular bundles**. In the monocotyledons, the vascular bundles have no cambium present in them. Hence, since they do not form secondary tissues they are referred to as **closed**. When xylem and phloem within a vascular bundle are arranged in an alternate manner along the different radii, the arrangement is called **radial** such as in roots. In **conjoint** type of vascular bundles, the xylem and phloem are jointly situated along the same radius of vascular bundles. Such vascular bundles are common in stems and leaves. The conjoint vascular bundles usually have the phloem located only on the outer side of xylem.

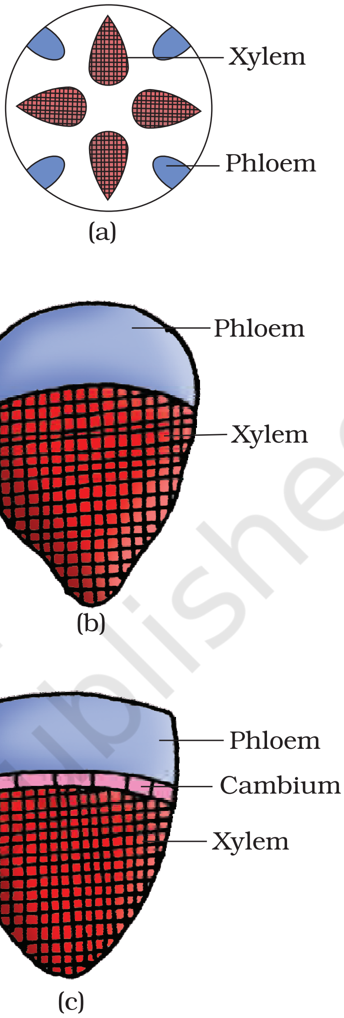

Figure 6.2 Various types of vascular bundles : (a) radial (b) conjoint closed (c) conjoint open

6.2 ANATOMY OF DICOTYLEDONOUS AND MONOCOTYLEDONOUS PLANTS

For a better understanding of tissue organisation of roots, stems and leaves, it is convenient to study the transverse sections of the mature zones of these organs.

6.2.1 Dicotyledonous Root

Look at Figure 6.3 (a), it shows the transverse section of the sunflower root. The internal tissue organisation is as follows:

The outermost layer is **epiblema.** Many of the cells of epiblema protrude in the form of unicellular root hairs. The **cortex** consists of several layers of thin-walled parenchyma cells

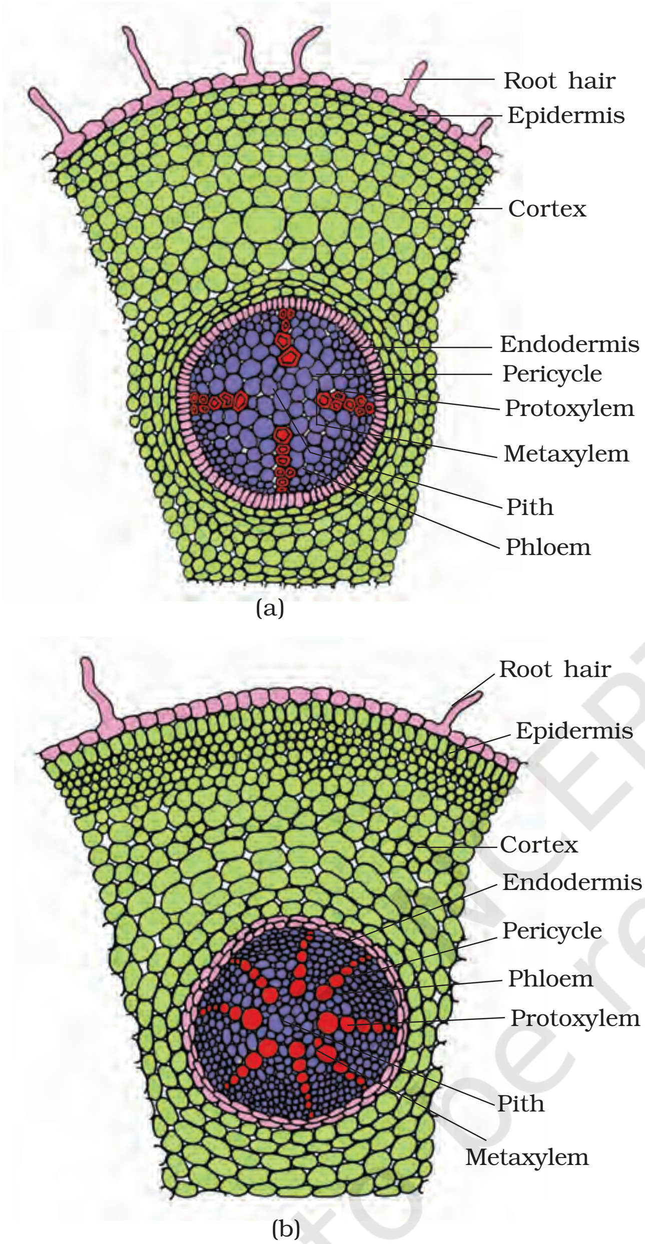
Root hair
Epidermis
Cortex
Endodermis
Pericycle
Protoxylem
Metaxylem
Pith
Phloem
(a)
Root hair
Epidermis
Cortex
Endodermis
Pericycle
Phloem
Protoxylem
Pith
Metaxylem
(b)

Figure 6.3 T.S. : (a) Dicot root (Primary) (b) Monocot root

with intercellular spaces. The innermost layer of the cortex is called **endodermis.** It comprises a single layer of barrel-shaped cells without any intercellular spaces. The tangential as well as radial walls of the endodermal cells have a deposition of water-impermeable, waxy material suberin in the form of **casparian strips**. Next to endodermis lies a few layers of thick-walled parenchyomatous cells referred to as **pericycle**. Initiation of lateral roots and vascular cambium during the secondary growth takes place in these cells. The pith is small or inconspicuous. The parenchymatous cells which lie between the xylem and the phloem are called **conjuctive tissue**. There are usually two to four xylem and phloem patches. Later, a cambium ring develops between the xylem and phloem. All tissues on the innerside of the endodermis such as pericycle, vascular bundles and pith constitute the **stele**.

6.2.2 Monocotyledonous Root

The anatomy of the monocot root is similar to the dicot root in many respects (Figure 6.3 b). It has epidermis, cortex, endodermis, pericycle, vascular bundles and pith. As compared to the dicot root which have fewer xylem bundles, there are usually more than six (polyarch) xylem bundles in the monocot root. Pith is large and well developed. Monocotyledonous roots do not undergo any secondary growth.

6.2.3 Dicotyledonous Stem

The transverse section of a typical young dicotyledonous stem shows that the **epidermis** is the outermost protective layer of the stem

(Figure 6.4 a). Covered with a thin layer of cuticle, it may bear trichomes and a few stomata. The cells arranged in multiple layers between epidermis and pericycle constitute the cortex. It consists of three sub-zones. The outer **hypodermis**, consists of a few layers of collenchymatous cells just below the epidermis, which provide mechanical strength to the young stem. **Cortical layers** below hypodermis consist of rounded thin walled parenchymatous cells with conspicuous intercellular spaces. The innermost layer of the cortex is called the **endodermis.** The cells of the endodermis are rich in starch grains and the layer is also referred to as the **starch sheath. Pericycle** is

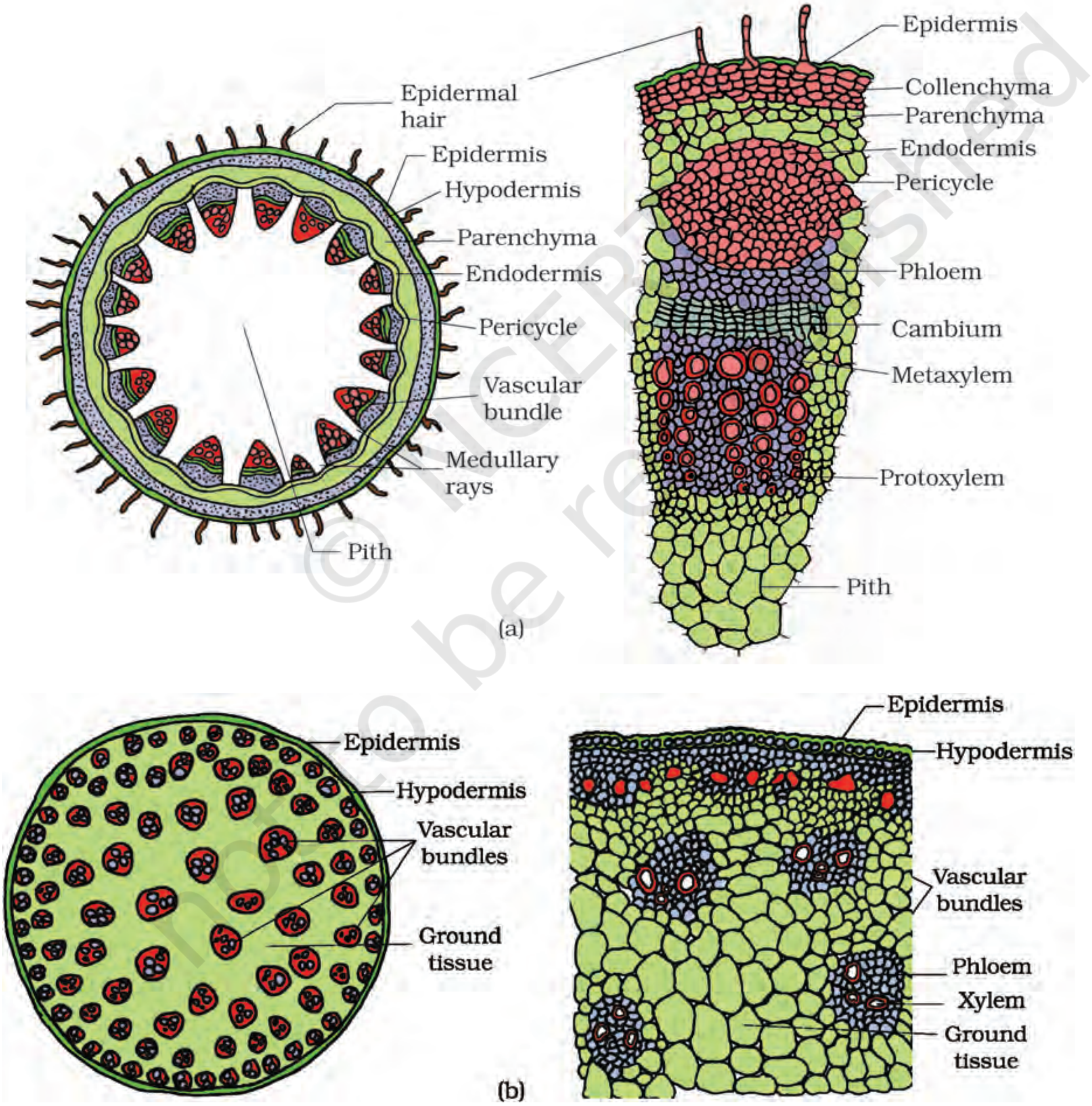
Epidermal hair
Epidermis
Hypodermis
Parenchyma
Endodermis
Pericycle
Vascular bundle
Medullary rays
Pith
Epidermis
Collenchyma
Parenchyma
Endodermis
Pericycle
Phloem
Cambium
Metaxylem
Protoxylem
Pith
(a)
Epidermis
Hypodermis
Vascular bundles
Ground tissue
(b)
Epidermis
Hypodermis
Vascular bundles
Phloem
Xylem
Ground tissue

Figure 6.4 T.S. of stem : (a) Dicot (b) Monocot

present on the inner side of the endodermis and above the phloem in the form of semi-lunar patches of sclerenchyma. In between the vascular bundles there are a few layers of radially placed parenchymatous cells, which constitute medullary rays. A large number of **vascular bundles** are arranged in a ring ; the 'ring' arrangement of vascular bundles is a characteristic of dicot stem. Each vascular bundle is conjoint, open, and with endarch protoxylem. A large number of rounded, parenchymatous cells with large intercellular spaces which occupy the central portion of the stem constitute the **pith**.

6.2.4 Monocotyledonous Stem

The monocot stem has a sclerenchymatous hypodermis, a large number of scattered vascular bundles, each surrounded by a sclerenchymatous bundle sheath, and a large, conspicuous parenchymatous ground tissue (Figure 6.4 b). Vascular bundles are conjoint and closed. Peripheral vascular bundles are generally smaller than the centrally located ones. The phloem parenchyma is absent, and water-containing cavities are present within the vascular bundles.

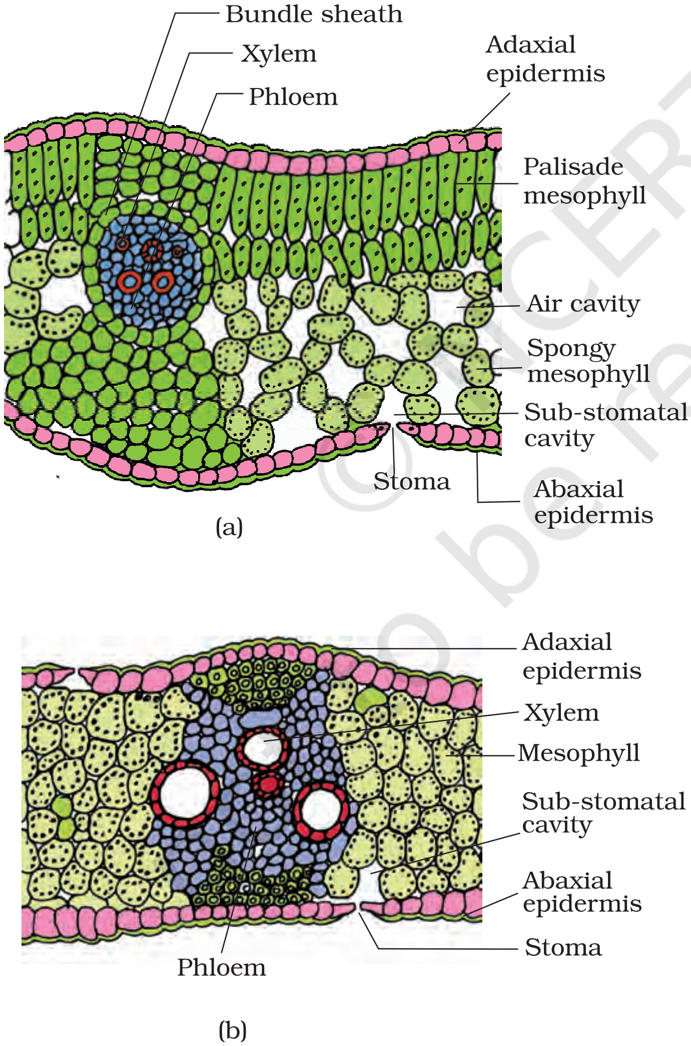
Bundle sheath
Xylem
Phloem
Adaxial epidermis
Palisade mesophyll
Air cavity
Spongy mesophyll
Sub-stomatal cavity
Stoma
Abaxial epidermis
(a)
Adaxial epidermis
Xylem
Mesophyll
Sub-stomatal cavity
Abaxial epidermis
Stoma
Phloem
(b)

Figure 6.5 T.S. of leaf : (a) Dicot (b) Monocot

6.2.5 Dorsiventral (Dicotyledonous) Leaf

The vertical section of a dorsiventral leaf through the lamina shows three main parts, namely, epidermis, mesophyll and vascular system**.** The **epidermis** which covers both the upper surface (adaxial epidermis) and lower surface (abaxial epidermis) of the leaf has a conspicuous cuticle. The abaxial epidermis generally bears more stomata than the adaxial epidermis. The latter may even lack stomata. The tissue between the upper and the lower epidermis is called the **mesophyll**. Mesophyll, which possesses chloroplasts and carry out photosynthesis, is made up of parenchyma. It has two types of cells – the **palisade parenchyma** and the **spongy parenchyma**. The adaxially placed palisade parenchyma is made up of elongated cells, which are arranged

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vertically and parallel to each other. The oval or round and loosely arranged spongy parenchyma is situated below the palisade cells and extends to the lower epidermis. There are numerous large spaces and air cavities between these cells. **Vascular system** includes vascular bundles, which can be seen in the veins and the midrib. The size of the vascular bundles are dependent on the size of the veins. The veins vary in thickness in the reticulate venation of the dicot leaves. The vascular bundles are surrounded by a layer of thick walled **bundle sheath cells**. Look at Figure 6.5 (a) and find the position of xylem in the vascular bundle.

6.2.6 Isobilateral (Monocotyledonous) Leaf

The anatomy of isobilateral leaf is similar to that of the dorsiventral leaf in many ways. It shows the following characteristic differences. In an isobilateral leaf, the stomata are present on both the surfaces of the epidermis; and the mesophyll is not differentiated into palisade and spongy parenchyma (Figure 6.5 b).

In grasses, certain adaxial epidermal cells along the veins modify themselves into large, empty, colourless cells. These are called **bulliform cells.** When the bulliform cells in the leaves have absorbed water and are turgid, the leaf surface is exposed. When they are flaccid due to water stress, they make the leaves curl inwards to minimise water loss.

The parallel venation in monocot leaves is reflected in the near similar sizes of vascular bundles (except in main veins) as seen in vertical sections of the leaves.

SUMMARY

Anatomically, a plant is made of different kinds of tissues. The plant tissues are broadly classified into meristematic (apical, lateral and intercalary) and permanent (simple and complex). Assimilation of food and its storage, transportation of water, minerals and photosynthates, and mechanical support are the main functions of tissues. There are three types of tissue systems – epidermal, ground and vascular. The epidermal tissue systems are made of epidermal cells, stomata and the epidermal appendages. The ground tissue system forms the main bulk of the plant. It is divided into three zones – cortex, pericycle and pith. The vascular tissue system is formed by the xylem and phloem. On the basis of presence of cambium, location of xylem and phloem, the vascular bundles are of different types. The vascular bundles form the conducting tissue and translocate water, minerals and food material.

Monocotyledonous and dicotyledonous plants show marked variation in their internal structures. They differ in type, number and location of vascular bundles. The secondary growth occurs in most of the dicotyledonous roots and stems.

EXERCISES

1. Draw illustrations to bring out the anatomical difference between

   (a) Monocot root and Dicot root

   (b) Monocot stem and Dicot stem
2. Cut a transverse section of young stem of a plant from your school garden and observe it under the microscope. How would you ascertain whether it is a monocot stem or a dicot stem? Give reasons.
3. The transverse section of a plant material shows the following anatomical features - (a) the vascular bundles are conjoint, scattered and surrounded by a sclerenchymatous bundle sheaths. (b) phloem parenchyma is absent. What will you identify it as?
4. What is stomatal apparatus? Explain the structure of stomata with a labelled diagram.
5. Name the three basic tissue systems in the flowering plants. Give the tissue names under each system.
6. How is the study of plant anatomy useful to us?
7. Describe the internal structure of a dorsiventral leaf with the help of labelled diagrams.

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CHAPTER 7

STRUCTURAL ORGANISATION IN ANIMALS

7.1 Organ and Organ System
7.2 Frogs

In the preceding chapters you came across a large variety of organisms, both unicellular and multicellular, of the animal kingdom. In unicellular organisms, all functions like digestion, respiration and reproduction are performed by a single cell. In the complex body of multicellular animals the same basic functions are carried out by different groups of cells in a well organised manner. The body of a simple organism like *Hydra* is made of different types of cells and the number of cells in each type can be in thousands. The human body is composed of billions of cells to perform various functions. How do these cells in the body work together? As you have already learnt in your earlier classes, in multicellular animals, a group of similar cells alongwith intercellular substances perform a specific function. Such an organisation is called **tissue**.

You may be surprised to know that all complex animals consist of only four basic types of tissues. These tissues are organised in specific proportion and pattern to form an organ like stomach, lung, heart and kidney. When two or more organs perform a common function by their physical and/or chemical interaction, they together form organ system, e.g., digestive system, respiratory system, etc. Cells, tissues, organs and organ systems split up the work in a way that exhibits division of labour and contribute to the survival of the body as a whole.

7.1 ORGAN AND ORGAN SYSTEM

The basic tissues as you have learnt in earlier classes, organise to form organs which in turn associate to form organ systems in the multicellular organisms. Such an organisation is essential for more efficient and better coordinated activities of millions of cells constituting an organism. Each organ in our body is made of one or more type of tissues. For example, our heart consists of all the four types of tissues, i.e., epithelial, connective, muscular and neural. We also notice, after some careful study that the complexity in organ and organ systems displays certain discernable trend. This discernable trend is called evolutionary trend (You will study the details in class XII). In this chapter, you are being introduced to morphology and anatomy of frog. Morphology refers to study of form or externally visible features. In the case of plants or microbes, the term morphology precisely means only this. In case of animals this refers to the external appearance of the organs or parts of the body. The word anatomy conventionally is used for the study of morphology of internal organs in the animals. You will learn the morphology and anatomy of frog representing vertebrates.

7.2 FROGS

Frogs can live both on land and in freshwater and belong to class Amphibia of phylum Chordata. The most common species of frog found in India is *Rana tigrina.*

They do not have constant body temperature i.e., their body temperature varies with the temperature of the environment. Such animals are called cold blooded or poikilotherms. You might have also noticed changes in the colour of the frogs while they are in grasses and on dry land. They have the ability to change the colour to hide them from their enemies (camouflage). This protective coloration is called mimicry. You may also know that frogs are not seen during peak summer and winter. During this period they take shelter in deep burrows to protect them from extreme heat and cold. This is known as summer sleep (aestivation) and winter sleep (hibernation) respectively.

7.2.1 Morphology

Have you ever touched the skin of frog? The skin is smooth and slippery due to the presence of mucus. The skin is always maintained in a moist condition. The colour of dorsal side of body is generally olive green with dark irregular spots. On the ventral side the skin is uniformly pale yellow. The frog never drinks water but absorb it through the skin.

Body of a frog is divisible into head and trunk (Figure 7.1). A neck and tail are absent. Above the mouth, a pair of nostrils is present. Eyes are bulged and covered by a nictitating membrane that protects them while in water. On either side of eyes a membranous tympanum (ear) receives sound signals. The forelimbs and hind limbs help in

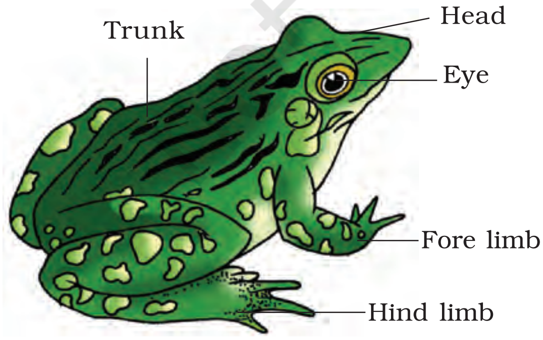

Figure 7.1 External features of frog

swimming, walking, leaping and burrowing. The hind limbs end in five digits and they are larger and muscular than fore limbs that end in four digits. Feet have webbed digits that help in swimming. Frogs exhibit sexual dimorphism. Male frogs can be distinguished by the presence of sound producing vocal sacs and also a copulatory pad on the first digit of the fore limbs which are absent in female frogs.

7.2.2 Anatomy

The body cavity of frogs accommodate different organ systems such as digestive, circulatory, respiratory, nervous, excretory and reproductive systems with well developed structures and functions (Figure 7.2).

The digestive system consists of alimentary canal and digestive glands. The alimentary canal is short because frogs are carnivores and hence the length of intestine is reduced. The mouth opens into the buccal cavity that leads to the oesophagus through pharynx. Oesophagus is a short tube that opens into the stomach which in turn continues as the intestine, rectum and finally opens outside by the cloaca. Liver secretes bile that is stored in the gall bladder. Pancreas, a digestive gland produces pancreatic juice

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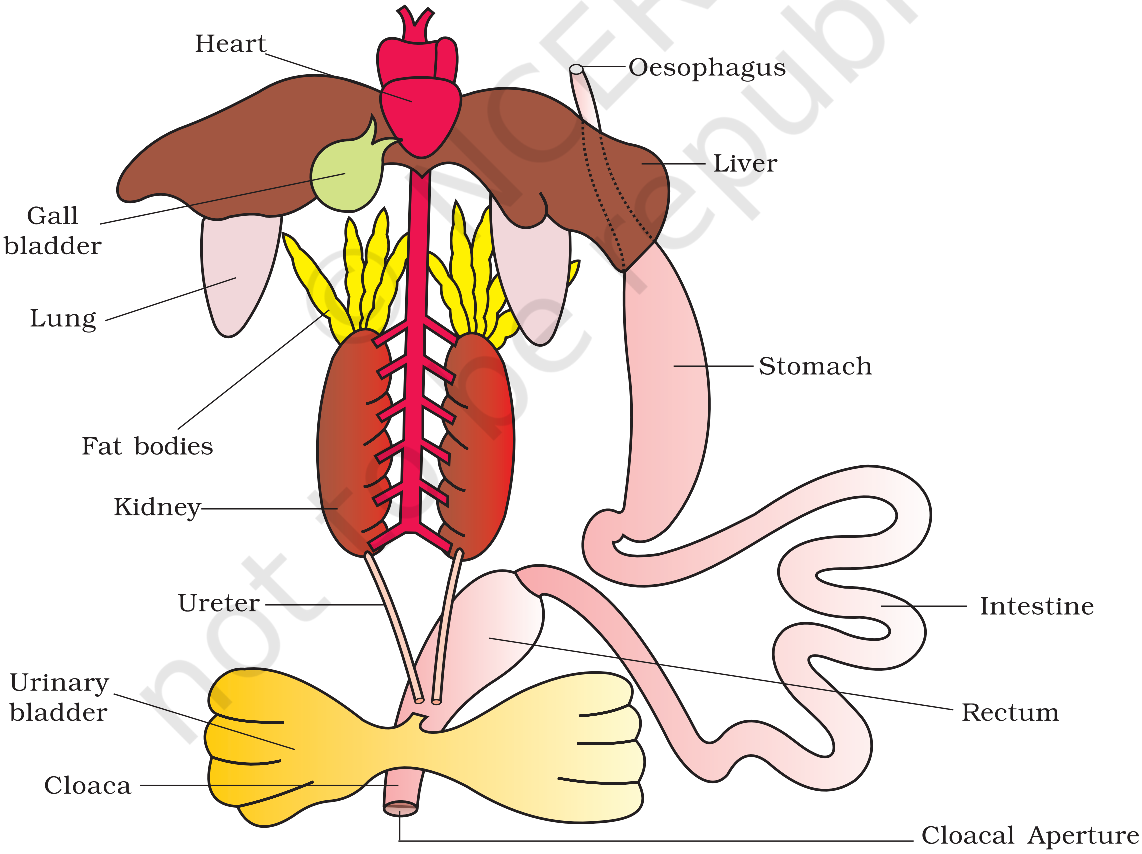


Figure 7.2 Diagrammatic representation of internal organs of frog showing complete digestive system

containing digestive enzymes. Food is captured by the bilobed tongue. Digestion of food takes place by the action of HCl and gastric juices secreted from the walls of the stomach. Partially digested food called chyme is passed from stomach to the first part of the small intestine, the duodenum. The duodenum receives bile from gall bladder and pancreatic juices from the pancreas through a common bile duct. Bile emulsifies fat and pancreatic juices digest carbohydrates and proteins. Final digestion takes place in the intestine. Digested food is absorbed by the numerous finger-like folds in the inner wall of intestine called villi and microvilli. The undigested solid waste moves into the rectum and passes out through cloaca.

Frogs respire on land and in the water by two different methods. In water, skin acts as aquatic respiratory organ (cutaneous respiration). Dissolved oxygen in the water is exchanged through the skin by diffusion. On land, the buccal cavity, skin and lungs act as the respiratory organs. The respiration by lungs is called pulmonary respiration. The lungs are a pair of elongated, pink coloured sac-like structures present in the upper part of the trunk region (thorax). Air enters through the nostrils into the buccal cavity and then to lungs. During aestivation and hibernation gaseous exchange takes place through skin.

The vascular system of frog is well-developed closed type. Frogs have a lymphatic system also. The blood vascular system involves heart, blood vessels and blood. The lymphatic system consists of lymph, lymph channels and lymph nodes. Heart is a muscular structure situated in the upper part of the body cavity. It has three chambers, two atria and one ventricle and is covered by a membrane called pericardium. A triangular structure called sinus venosus joins the right atrium. It receives blood through the major veins called vena cava. The ventricle opens into a sac-like conus arteriosus on the ventral side of the heart. The blood from the heart is carried to all parts of the body by the arteries (arterial system). The veins collect blood from different parts of body to the heart and form the venous system. Special venous connection between liver and intestine as well as the kidney and lower parts of the body are present in frogs. The former is called hepatic portal system and the latter is called renal portal system. The blood is composed of plasma and cells. The blood cells are RBC (red blood cells) or erythrocytes, WBC (white blood cells) or leucocytes and platelets. RBC's are nucleated and contain red coloured pigment namely haemoglobin. The lymph is different from blood. It lacks few proteins and RBCs. The blood carries nutrients, gases and water to the respective sites during the circulation. The circulation of blood is achieved by the pumping action of the muscular heart.

The elimination of nitrogenous wastes is carried out by a well developed excretory system. The excretory system consists of a pair of kidneys, ureters, cloaca and urinary bladder. These are compact, dark red and bean like structures situated a little posteriorly in the body cavity on both sides of vertebral column. Each kidney is composed of several structural and functional units called uriniferous tubules or nephrons. Two ureters emerge from the kidneys in the male frogs. The ureters act as urinogenital duct which opens into the cloaca. In females the ureters and oviduct open seperately in the cloaca. The thin-walled urinary bladder is present ventral to the rectum which also opens in the cloaca. The frog excretes urea and thus is a **ureotelic** animal. Excretory wastes are carried by blood into the kidney where it is separated and excreted.

The system for control and coordination is highly evolved in the frog. It includes both neural system and endocrine glands. The chemical coordination of various organs of the body is achieved by hormones which are secreted by the endocrine glands. The prominent endocrine glands found in frog are pituitary, thyroid, parathyroid, thymus, pineal body, pancreatic islets, adrenals and gonads. The nervous system is organised into a central nervous system (brain and spinal cord), a peripheral nervous system (cranial and spinal nerves) and an autonomic nervous system (sympathetic and parasympathetic). There are ten pairs of cranial nerves arising from the brain. Brain is enclosed in a bony structure called brain box (cranium). The brain is divided into fore-brain, mid-brain and hind-brain. Forebrain includes olfactory lobes, paired cerebral hemispheres and unpaired diencephalon. The midbrain is characterised by a pair of optic lobes. Hind-brain consists of cerebellum and medulla oblongata. The medulla oblongata passes out through the foramen magnum and continues into spinal cord, which is enclosed in the vertebral column.

Frog has different types of sense organs, namely organs of touch (sensory papillae), taste (taste buds), smell (nasal epithelium), vision (eyes) and hearing (tympanum with internal ears). Out of these, eyes and internal ears are well-organised structures and the rest are cellular aggregations around nerve endings. Eyes in a frog are a pair of spherical structures situated in the orbit in skull. These are simple eyes (possessing only one unit). External ear is absent in frogs and only tympanum can be seen externally. The ear is an organ of hearing as well as balancing (equilibrium).

Frogs have well organised male and female reproductive systems. Male reproductive organs consist of a pair of yellowish ovoid testes (Figure 7.3), which are found adhered to the upper part of kidneys by a double fold of peritoneum called mesorchium. Vasa efferentia are 10-12 in number that arise from testes. They enter the kidneys on their side and open into Bidder's

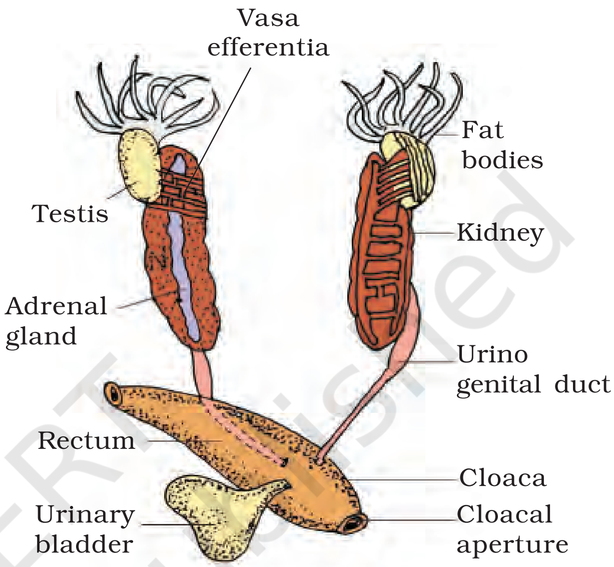


Figure 7.3 Male reproductive system

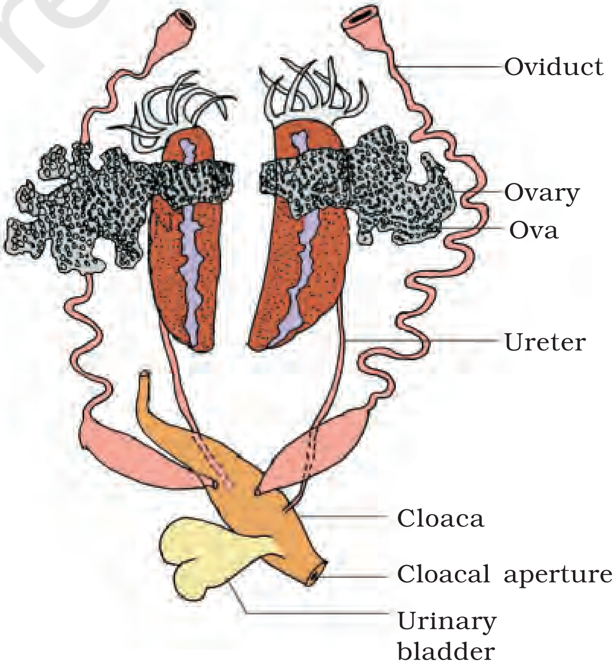


Figure 7.4 Female reproductive system

canal. Finally it communicates with the urinogenital duct that comes out of the kidneys and opens into the cloaca. The cloaca is a small, median chamber that is used to pass faecal matter, urine and sperms to the exterior.

The female reproductive organs include a pair of ovaries (Figure 7.4). The ovaries are situated near kidneys and there is no functional connection with kidneys. A pair of oviduct arising from the ovaries opens into the cloaca separately. A mature female can lay 2500 to 3000 ova at a time. Fertilisation is external and takes place in water. Development involves a larval stage called tadpole. Tadpole undergoes metamorphosis to form the adult.

Frogs are beneficial for mankind because they eat insects and protect the crop. Frogs maintain ecological balance because these serve as an important link of food chain and food web in the ecosystem. In some countries the muscular legs of frog are used as food by man.

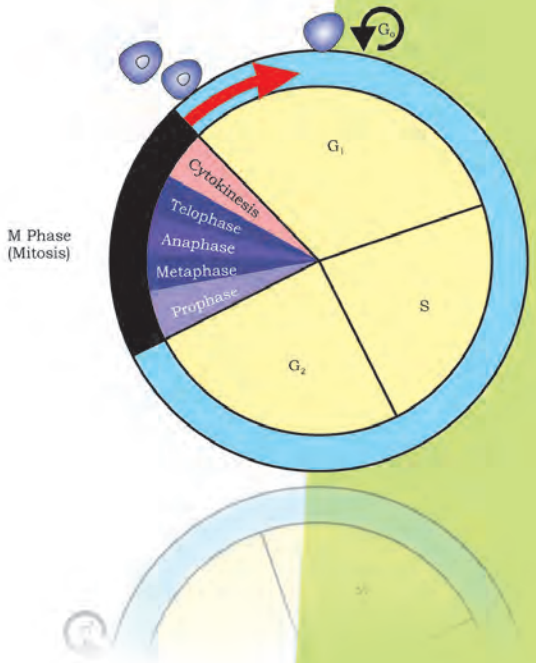
SUMMARY

Cells, tissues, organs and organ systems split up the work in a way that ensures the survival of the body as a whole and exhibit division of labour. A tissue is defined as group of cells along with intercellular substances performing one or more functions in the body. Epithelia are sheet like tissues lining the body's surface and its cavities, ducts and tubes. Epithelia have one free surface facing a body fluid or the outside environment. Their cells are structurally and functionally connected at junctions.

The Indian bullfrog, *Rana tigrina,* is the common frog found in India. Body is covered by skin. Mucous glands are present in the skin which is highly vascularised and helps in respiration in water and on land. Body is divisible into head and trunk. A muscular tongue is present, which is bilobed at the tip and is used in capturing the prey. The alimentary canal consists of oesophagous, stomach, intestine and rectum, which open into the cloaca. The main digestive glands are liver and pancreas. It can respire in water through skin and through lungs on land. Circulatory system is closed with single circulation. RBCs are nucleated. Nervous system is organised into central, peripheral and autonomic. The organs of urinogenital system are kidneys and urinogenital ducts, which open into the cloaca. The male reproductive organ is a pair of testes. The female reproductive organ is a pair of ovaries. A female lays 2500-3000 ova at a time. The fertilisation and development are external. The eggs hatch into tadpoles, which metamorphose into frogs.

EXERCISES

1. Draw a neat diagram of digestive system of frog.
2. Mention the function of the Ureters in frog.



UNIT 3

CELL: STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

Chapter 8
Cell: The Unit of Life

Chapter 9
Biomolecules

Chapter 10
Cell Cycle and
Cell Division

Biology is the study of living organisms. The detailed description of their form and appearance only brought out their diversity. It is the cell theory that emphasised the unity underlying this diversity of forms, i.e., the cellular organisation of all life forms. A description of cell structure and cell growth by division is given in the chapters comprising this unit. Cell theory also created a sense of mystery around living phenomena, i.e., physiological and behavioural processes. This mystery was the requirement of integrity of cellular organisation for living phenomena to be demonstrated or observed. In studying and understanding the physiological and behavioural processes, one can take a physico-chemical approach and use cell-free systems to investigate. This approach enables us to describe the various processes in molecular terms. The approach is established by analysis of living tissues for elements and compounds. It will tell us what types of organic compounds are present in living organisms. In the next stage, one can ask the question: What are these compounds doing inside a cell? And, in what way they carry out gross physiological processes like digestion, excretion, memory, defense, recognition, etc. In other words we answer the question, what is the molecular basis of all physiological processes? It can also explain the abnormal processes that occur during any diseased condition. This physico-chemical approach to study and understand living organisms is called 'Reductionist Biology'. The concepts and techniques of physics and chemistry are applied to understand biology. In Chapter 9 of this unit, a brief description of biomolecules is provided.

G.N. Ramachandran
(1922 – 2001)

G.N. Ramachandran, an outstanding figure in the field of protein structure, was the founder of the 'Madras school' of conformational analysis of biopolymers. His discovery of the triple helical structure of collagen published in *Nature* in 1954 and his analysis of the allowed conformations of proteins through the use of the 'Ramachandran plot' rank among the most outstanding contributions in structural biology. He was born on October 8, 1922, in a small town, not far from Cochin on the southwestern coast of India. His father was a professor of mathematics at a local college and thus had considerable influence in shaping Ramachandran's interest in mathematics. After completing his school years, Ramachandran graduated in 1942 as the top-ranking student in the B.Sc. (Honors) Physics course of the University of Madras. He received a Ph.D. from Cambridge University in 1949. While at Cambridge, Ramachandran met Linus Pauling and was deeply influenced by his publications on models of the α-helix and β-sheet structures that directed his attention to solving the structure of collagen. He passed away at the age of 78, on April 7, 2001.

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CHAPTER 8

CELL: THE UNIT OF LIFE

8.1 What is a Cell?
8.2 Cell Theory
8.3 An Overview of Cell
8.4 Prokaryotic Cells
8.5 Eukaryotic Cells

When you look around, you see both living and non-living things. You must have wondered and asked yourself – 'what is it that makes an organism living, or what is it that an inanimate thing does not have which a living thing has' ? The answer to this is the presence of the basic unit of life – the cell in all living organisms.

All organisms are composed of cells. Some are composed of a single cell and are called unicellular organisms while others, like us, composed of many cells, are called multicellular organisms.

8.1 WHAT IS A CELL?

Unicellular organisms are capable of (i) independent existence and (ii) performing the essential functions of life. Anything less than a complete structure of a cell does not ensure independent living. Hence, cell is the fundamental structural and functional unit of all living organisms.

Antonie Von Leeuwenhoek first saw and described a live cell. Robert Brown later discovered the nucleus. The invention of the microscope and its improvement leading to the electron microscope revealed all the structural details of the cell.

8.2 CELL THEORY

In 1838, Matthias Schleiden, a German botanist, examined a large number of plants and observed that all plants are composed of different kinds of cells which form the tissues of the plant. At about the same time, Theodore

Schwann (1839), a German Zoologist, studied different types of animal cells and reported that cells had a thin outer layer which is today known as the ‘plasma membrane’. He also concluded, based on his studies on plant tissues, that the presence of cell wall is a unique character of the plant cells. On the basis of this, Schwann proposed the hypothesis that the bodies of animals and plants are composed of cells and products of cells.

Schleiden and Schwann together formulated the cell theory. This theory however, did not explain as to how new cells were formed. Rudolf Virchow (1855) first explained that cells divided and new cells are formed from pre-existing cells (*Omnis cellula-e cellula*). He modified the hypothesis of Schleiden and Schwann to give the cell theory a final shape. Cell theory as understood today is:

(i) all living organisms are composed of cells and products of cells.

(ii) all cells arise from pre-existing cells.

8.3 AN OVERVIEW OF CELL

You have earlier observed cells in an onion peel and/or human cheek cells under the microscope. Let us recollect their structure. The onion cell which is a typical plant cell, has a distinct cell wall as its outer boundary and just within it is the cell membrane. The cells of the human cheek have an outer membrane as the delimiting structure of the cell. Inside each cell is a dense membrane bound structure called nucleus. This nucleus contains the chromosomes which in turn contain the genetic material, DNA. Cells that have membrane bound nuclei are called eukaryotic whereas cells that lack a membrane bound nucleus are prokaryotic. In both prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells, a semi-fluid matrix called cytoplasm occupies the volume of the cell. The cytoplasm is the main arena of cellular activities in both the plant and animal cells. Various chemical reactions occur in it to keep the cell in the ‘living state’.

Besides the nucleus, the eukaryotic cells have other membrane bound distinct structures called **organelles** like the endoplasmic reticulum (ER), the golgi complex, lysosomes, mitochondria, microbodies and vacuoles. The prokaryotic cells lack such membrane bound organelles.

Ribosomes are non-membrane bound organelles found in all cells – both eukaryotic as well as prokaryotic. Within the cell, ribosomes are found not only in the cytoplasm but also within the two organelles – chloroplasts (in plants) and mitochondria and on rough ER.

Animal cells contain another non-membrane bound organelle called centrosome which helps in cell division.

Cells differ greatly in size, shape and activities (Figure 8.1). For example, Mycoplasmas, the smallest cells, are only 0.3 μm in length while bacteria

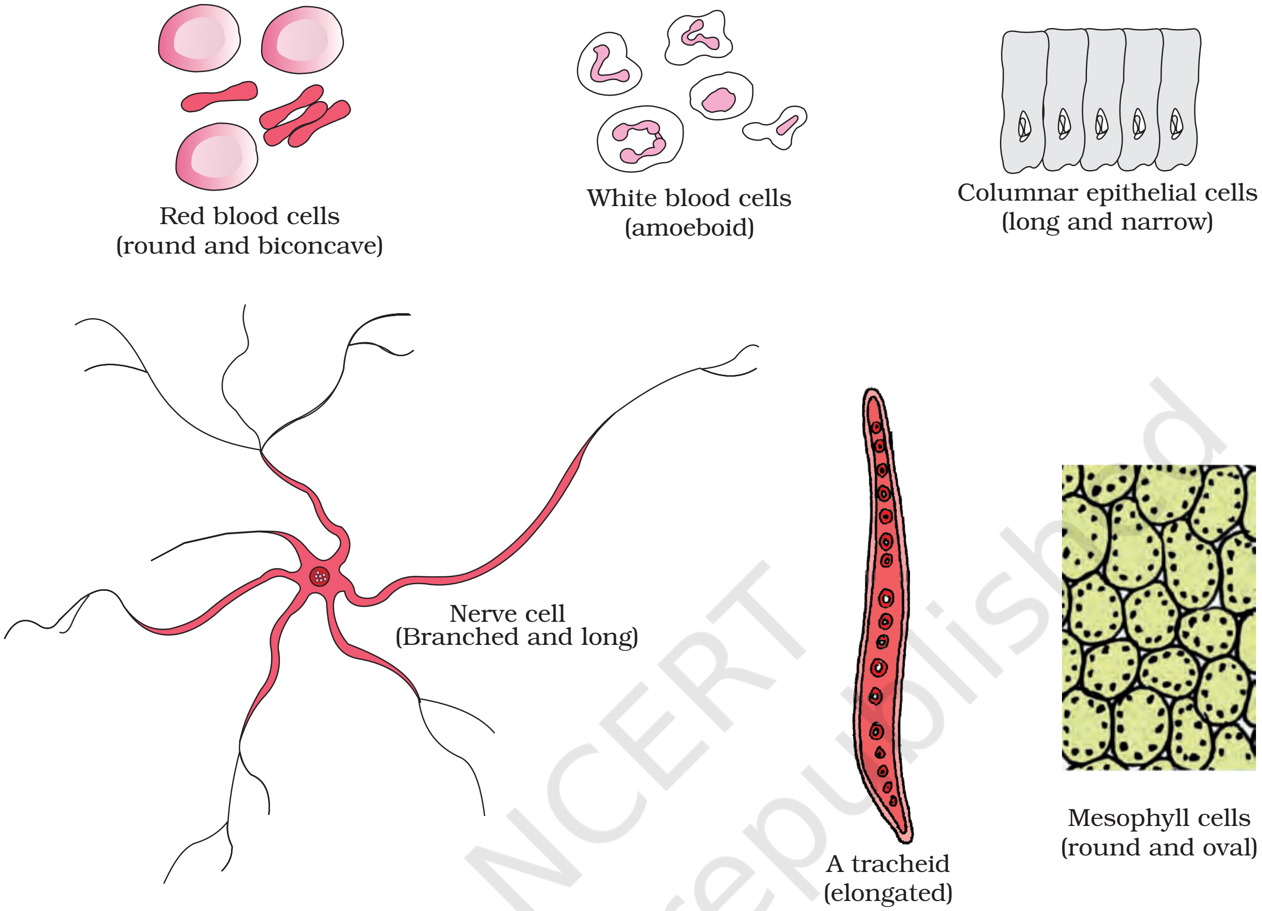

Red blood cells
(round and biconcave)
White blood cells
(amoeboid)
Columnar epithelial cells
(long and narrow)
Nerve cell
(Branched and long)
A tracheid
(elongated)
Mesophyll cells
(round and oval)

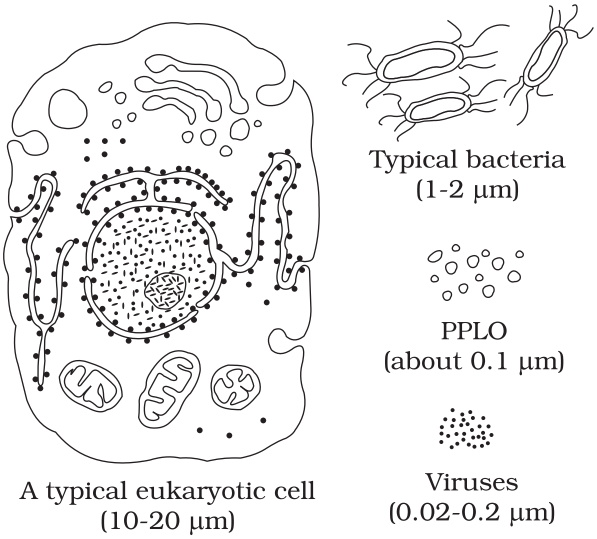
Figure 8.1 Diagram showing different shapes of the cells

could be 3 to 5 µm. The largest isolated single cell is the egg of an ostrich. Among multicellular organisms, human red blood cells are about 7.0 µm in diameter. Nerve cells are some of the longest cells. Cells also vary greatly in their shape. They may be disc-like, polygonal, columnar, cuboid, thread like, or even irregular. The shape of the cell may vary with the function they perform.

8.4 PROKARYOTIC CELLS

The prokaryotic cells are represented by bacteria, blue-green algae, mycoplasma and PPLO (Pleuro Pneumonia Like Organisms). They are generally smaller and multiply more rapidly than the eukaryotic cells (Figure 8.2). They may vary greatly in shape and size. The four basic shapes of bacteria are bacillus (rod like), coccus (spherical), vibrio (comma shaped) and spirillum (spiral).

The organisation of the prokaryotic cell is fundamentally similar even though prokaryotes exhibit a wide variety of shapes and functions. All


A typical eukaryotic cell (10-20 µm)

Typical bacteria (1-2 µm)

PPLO (about 0.1 µm)

Viruses (0.02-0.2 µm)

Figure 8.2 Diagram showing comparison of eukaryotic cell with other organisms

prokaryotes have a cell wall surrounding the cell membrane except in mycoplasma. The semi-fluid matrix filling the cell is the cytoplasm. There is no well-defined nucleus. The genetic material is basically naked, not enveloped by a nuclear membrane. In addition to the genomic DNA (the single chromosome/circular DNA), many bacteria have small circular DNA outside the genomic DNA. These smaller DNA are called plasmids. The plasmid DNA confers certain unique phenotypic characters to such bacteria. One such character is resistance to antibiotics. In higher classes you will learn that this plasmid DNA is used to monitor bacterial transformation with foreign DNA. Nuclear membrane is found in eukaryotes. No organelles, like the ones in eukaryotes, are found in prokaryotic cells except for ribosomes. Prokaryotes have something unique in the form of inclusions. A specialised differentiated form of cell membrane called mesosome is the characteristic of prokaryotes. They are essentially infoldings of cell membrane.

8.4.1 Cell Envelope and its Modifications

Most prokaryotic cells, particularly the bacterial cells, have a chemically complex cell envelope. The cell envelope consists of a tightly bound three layered structure i.e., the outermost glycocalyx followed by the cell wall and then the plasma membrane. Although each layer of the envelope performs distinct function, they act together as a single protective unit. Bacteria can be classified into two groups on the basis of the differences in the cell envelopes and the manner in which they respond to the staining procedure developed by Gram viz., those that take up the gram stain are **Gram positive** and the others that do not are called **Gram negative** bacteria.

Glycocalyx differs in composition and thickness among different bacteria. It could be a loose sheath called the **slime layer** in some, while in others it may be thick and tough, called the **capsule**. The **cell wall** determines the shape of the cell and provides a strong structural support to prevent the bacterium from bursting or collapsing.

The plasma membrane is selectively permeable in nature and interacts with the outside world. This membrane is similar structurally to that of the eukaryotes.

A special membranous structure is the **mesosome** which is formed by the extensions of plasma membrane into the cell. These extensions are in the **form of vesicles, tubules and lamellae**. They help in cell wall formation, DNA replication and distribution to daughter cells. They also help in respiration, secretion processes, to increase the surface area of the plasma membrane and enzymatic content. In some prokaryotes like cyanobacteria, there are other membranous extensions into the cytoplasm called chromatophores which contain pigments.

Bacterial cells may be motile or non-motile. If motile, they have thin filamentous extensions from their cell wall called flagella. Bacteria show a range in the number and arrangement of flagella. Bacterial flagellum is composed of three parts – **filament, hook** and **basal body**. The filament is the longest portion and extends from the cell surface to the outside.

Besides flagella, Pili and Fimbriae are also surface structures of the bacteria but do not play a role in motility. The **pili** are elongated tubular structures made of a special protein. The **fimbriae** are small bristle like fibres sprouting out of the cell. In some bacteria, they are known to help attach the bacteria to rocks in streams and also to the host tissues.

8.4.2 Ribosomes and Inclusion Bodies

In prokaryotes, ribosomes are associated with the plasma membrane of the cell. They are about 15 nm by 20 nm in size and are made of two subunits - 50S and 30S units which when present together form 70S prokaryotic ribosomes. Ribosomes are the site of protein synthesis. Several ribosomes may attach to a single mRNA and form a chain called **polyribosomes** or **polysome**. The ribosomes of a polysome translate the mRNA into proteins.

Inclusion bodies: Reserve material in prokaryotic cells are stored in the cytoplasm in the form of inclusion bodies. These are not bound by any membrane system and lie free in the cytoplasm, e.g., phosphate granules, cyanophycean granules and glycogen granules. Gas vacuoles are found in blue green and purple and green photosynthetic bacteria.

8.5 EUKARYOTIC CELLS

The eukaryotes include all the protists, plants, animals and fungi. In eukaryotic cells there is an extensive compartmentalisation of cytoplasm through the presence of membrane bound organelles. Eukaryotic cells possess an organised nucleus with a nuclear envelope. In addition, eukaryotic cells have a variety of complex locomotory and cytoskeletal structures. Their genetic material is organised into chromosomes.

All eukaryotic cells are not identical. Plant and animal cells are different as the former possess cell walls, plastids and a large central vacuole which are absent in animal cells. On the other hand, animal cells have centrioles which are absent in almost all plant cells (Figure 8.3).

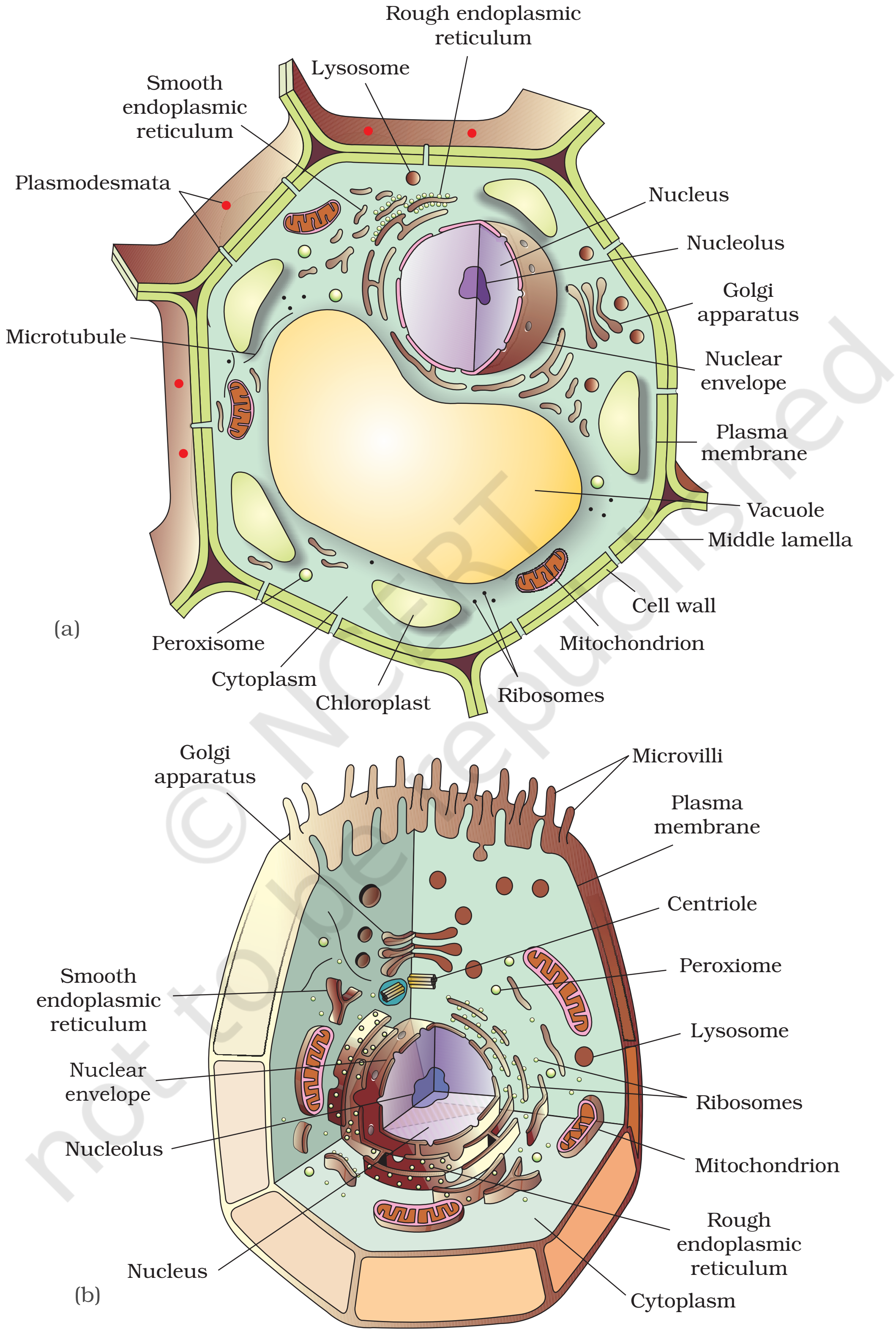

Rough endoplasmic reticulum
Lysosome
Smooth endoplasmic reticulum
Plasmodesmata
Nucleus
Nucleolus
Golgi apparatus
Microtubule
Nuclear envelope
Plasma membrane
Vacuole
Middle lamella
Cell wall
(a)
Peroxisome
Mitochondrion
Cytoplasm
Chloroplast
Ribosomes
Golgi apparatus
Microvilli
Plasma membrane
Centriole
Peroxiome
Smooth endoplasmic reticulum
Lysosome
Nuclear envelope
Ribosomes
Nucleolus
Mitochondrion
Rough endoplasmic reticulum
Nucleus
(b)
Cytoplasm

Figure 8.3 Diagram showing : (a) Plant cell (b) Animal cell

Let us now look at individual cell organelles to understand their structure and functions.

8.5.1 Cell Membrane

The detailed structure of the membrane was studied only after the advent of the electron microscope in the 1950s. Meanwhile, chemical studies on the cell membrane, especially in human red blood cells (RBCs), enabled the scientists to deduce the possible structure of plasma membrane.

These studies showed that the cell membrane is mainly composed of lipids and proteins. The major lipids are phospholipids that are arranged in a bilayer. Also, the lipids are arranged within the membrane with the polar head towards the outer sides and the hydrophobic tails towards the inner part.This ensures that the nonpolar tail of saturated hydrocarbons is protected from the aqueous environment (Figure 8.4). In addition to phospholipids, membrane also contains cholesterol.

Later, biochemical investigation clearly revealed that the cell membranes also possess protein and carbohydrate. The ratio of protein and lipid varies considerably in different cell types. In human beings, the membrane of the erythrocyte has approximately 52 per cent protein and 40 per cent lipids.

Depending on the ease of extraction, membrane proteins can be classified as integral and peripheral. Peripheral proteins lie on the surface of membrane while the integral proteins are partially or totally buried in the membrane.

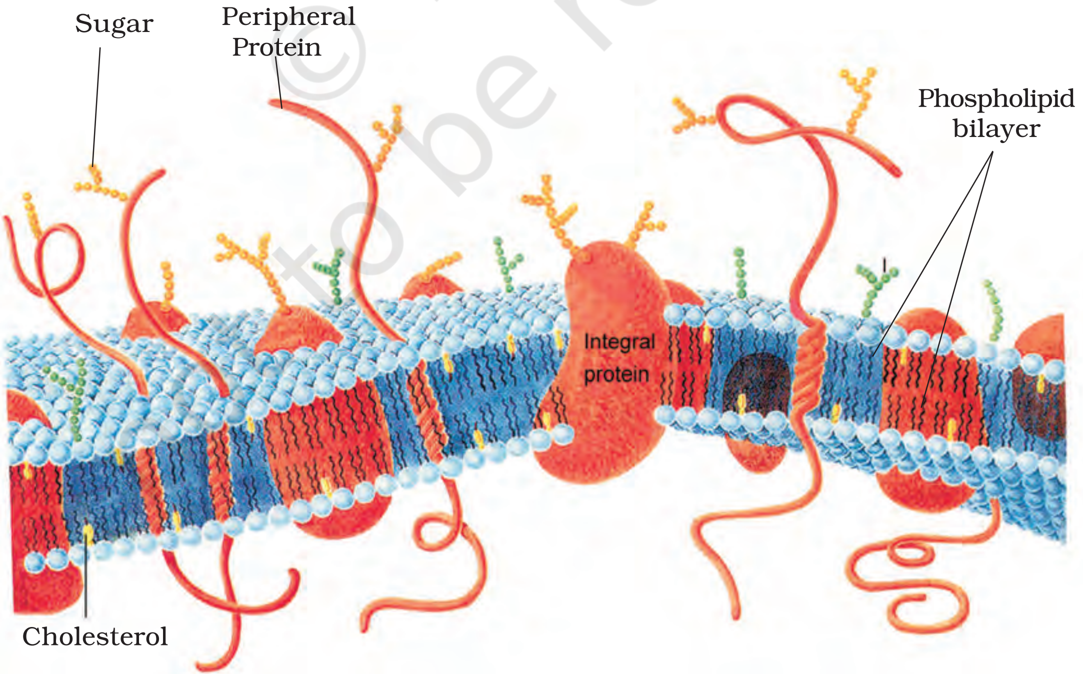


Figure 8.4 Fluid mosaic model of plasma membrane

An improved model of the structure of cell membrane was proposed by Singer and Nicolson (1972) widely accepted as **fluid mosaic model** (Figure 8.4). According to this, the quasi-fluid nature of lipid enables lateral movement of proteins within the overall bilayer. This ability to move within the membrane is measured as its fluidity.

The fluid nature of the membrane is also important from the point of view of functions like cell growth, formation of intercellular junctions, secretion, endocytosis, cell division etc.

One of the most important functions of the plasma membrane is the transport of the molecules across it. The membrane is selectively permeable to some molecules present on either side of it. Many molecules can move briefly across the membrane without any requirement of energy and this is called the **passive transport**. Neutral solutes may move across the membrane by the process of simple diffusion along the concentration gradient, i.e., from higher concentration to the lower. Water may also move across this membrane from higher to lower concentration. Movement of water by diffusion is called **osmosis**. As the polar molecules cannot pass through the nonpolar lipid bilayer, they require a carrier protein of the membrane to facilitate their transport across the membrane. A few ions or molecules are transported across the membrane against their concentration gradient, i.e., from lower to the higher concentration. Such a transport is an energy dependent process, in which ATP is utilised and is called **active transport**, e.g., Na^+/K^+ Pump.

8.5.2 Cell Wall

As you may recall, a non-living rigid structure called the cell wall forms an outer covering for the plasma membrane of fungi and plants. Cell wall not only gives shape to the cell and protects the cell from mechanical damage and infection, it also helps in cell-to-cell interaction and provides barrier to undesirable macromolecules. Algae have cell wall, made of cellulose, galactans, mannans and minerals like calcium carbonate, while in other plants it consists of cellulose, hemicellulose, pectins and proteins. The cell wall of a young plant cell, the **primary wall** is capable of growth, which gradually diminishes as the cell matures and the secondary wall is formed on the inner (towards membrane) side of the cell.

The middle lamella is a layer mainly of calcium pectate which holds or glues the different neighbouring cells together. The cell wall and middle lamellae may be traversed by plasmodesmata which connect the cytoplasm of neighbouring cells.

8.5.3 Endomembrane System

While each of the membranous organelles is distinct in terms of its structure and function, many of these are considered together as an endomembrane system because their functions are coordinated. The endomembrane system include endoplasmic reticulum (ER), golgi complex, lysosomes and vacuoles. Since the functions of the mitochondria, chloroplast and peroxisomes are not coordinated with the above components, these are not considered as part of the endomembrane system.

8.5.3.1 The Endoplasmic Reticulum (ER)

Electron microscopic studies of eukaryotic cells reveal the presence of a network or reticulum of tiny tubular structures scattered in the cytoplasm that is called the endoplasmic reticulum (ER) (Figure 8.5). Hence, ER divides the intracellular space into two distinct compartments, i.e., luminal (inside ER) and extra luminal (cytoplasm) compartments.

The ER often shows ribosomes attached to their outer surface. The endoplasmic reticulun bearing ribosomes on their surface is called rough endoplasmic reticulum (RER). In the absence of ribosomes they appear smooth and are called smooth endoplasmic reticulum (SER).

RER is frequently observed in the cells actively involved in protein synthesis and secretion. They are extensive and continuous with the outer membrane of the nucleus.

The smooth endoplasmic reticulum is the major site for synthesis of lipid. In animal cells lipid-like steroidal hormones are synthesised in SER.

8.5.3.2 Golgi apparatus

Camillo Golgi (1898) first observed densely stained reticular structures near the nucleus. These were later named Golgi bodies after him. They consist of many flat, disc-shaped sacs or cisternae of 0.5µm to 1.0µm diameter (Figure 8.6). These are stacked parallel to each other. Varied number of cisternae are present in a Golgi complex. The Golgi cisternae are concentrically arranged near the nucleus with distinct convex *cis* or the forming

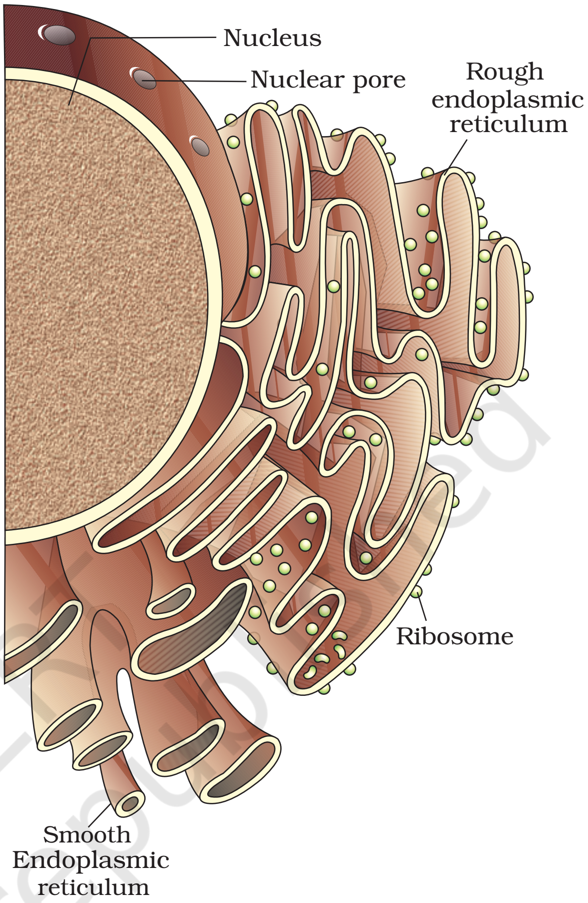


Figure 8.5 Endoplasmic reticulum

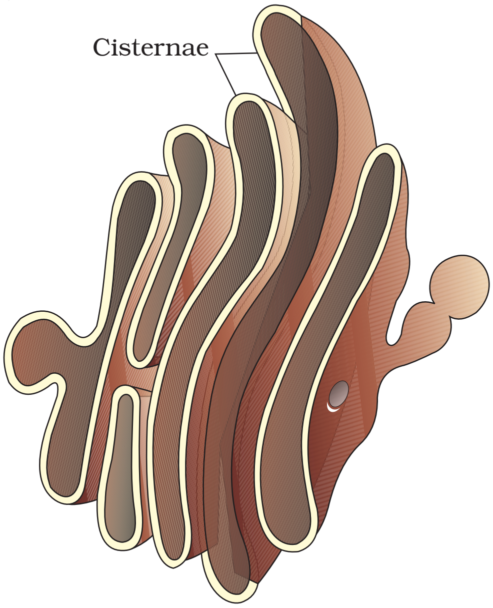


Figure 8.6 Golgi apparatus

face and concave *trans* or the maturing face. The *cis* and the *trans* faces of the organelle are entirely different, but interconnected.

The golgi apparatus principally performs the function of packaging materials, to be delivered either to the intra-cellular targets or secreted outside the cell. Materials to be packaged in the form of vesicles from the ER fuse with the *cis* face of the golgi apparatus and move towards the maturing face. This explains, why the golgi apparatus remains in close association with the endoplasmic reticulum. A number of proteins synthesised by ribosomes on the endoplasmic reticulum are modified in the cisternae of the golgi apparatus before they are released from its *trans* face. Golgi apparatus is the important site of formation of glycoproteins and glycolipids.

8.5.3.3 Lysosomes

These are membrane bound vesicular structures formed by the process of packaging in the golgi apparatus. The isolated lysosomal vesicles have been found to be very rich in almost all types of hydrolytic enzymes (hydrolases – lipases, proteases, carbohydrases) optimally active at the acidic pH. These enzymes are capable of digesting carbohydrates, proteins, lipids and nucleic acids.

8.5.3.4 Vacuoles

The vacuole is the membrane-bound space found in the cytoplasm. It contains water, sap, excretory product and other materials not useful for the cell. The vacuole is bound by a single membrane called tonoplast. In plant cells the vacuoles can occupy up to 90 per cent of the volume of the cell.

In plants, the tonoplast facilitates the transport of a number of ions and other materials against concentration gradients into the vacuole, hence their concentration is significantly higher in the vacuole than in the cytoplasm.

In *Amoeba,* the **contractile vacuole** is important for osmoregulation and excretion. In many cells, as in protists, **food vacuoles** are formed by engulfing the food particles.

8.5.4 Mitochondria

Mitochondria (sing.: mitochondrion), unless specifically stained, are not easily visible under the microscope. The number of mitochondria per cell is variable depending on the physiological activity of the cells. In terms of shape and size also, considerable degree of variability is observed. Typically it is sausage-shaped or cylindrical having a diameter of 0.2-1.0μm (average 0.5μm) and length 1.0-4.1μm. Each mitochondrion is a double

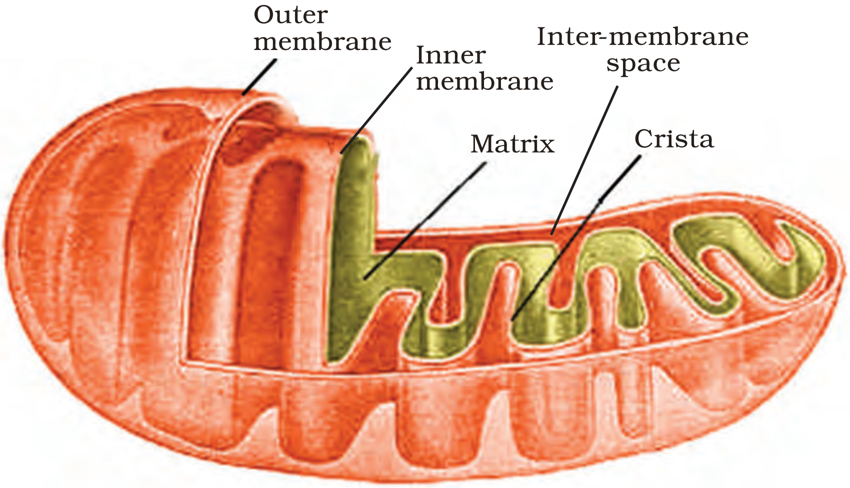


Figure 8.7 Structure of mitochondrion (Longitudinal section)

membrane-bound structure with the outer membrane and the inner membrane dividing its lumen distinctly into two aqueous compartments, i.e., the outer compartment and the inner compartment. The inner compartment is filled with a dense homogeneous substance called the **matrix.** The outer membrane forms the continuous limiting boundary of the organelle. The inner membrane forms a number of infoldings called the cristae (sing.: crista) towards the matrix (Figure 8.7). The cristae increase the surface area. The two membranes have their own specific enzymes associated with the mitochondrial function. Mitochondria are the sites of aerobic respiration. They produce cellular energy in the form of ATP, hence they are called 'power houses' of the cell. The matrix also possesses single circular DNA molecule, a few RNA molecules, ribosomes (70S) and the components required for the synthesis of proteins. The mitochondria divide by fission.

8.5.5 Plastids

Plastids are found in all plant cells and in euglenoides. These are easily observed under the microscope as they are large. They bear some specific pigments, thus imparting specific colours to the plants. Based on the type of pigments plastids can be classified into **chloroplasts, chromoplasts** and **leucoplasts.**

The chloroplasts contain **chlorophyll** and carotenoid pigments which are responsible for trapping light energy essential for photosynthesis. In the chromoplasts, fat soluble **carotenoid** pigments like carotene, xanthophylls and others are present. This gives the part of the plant a yellow, orange or red colour. The leucoplasts are the colourless plastids of varied shapes and sizes with stored nutrients: **Amyloplasts** store carbohydrates (starch), e.g., potato; **elaioplasts** store oils and fats whereas

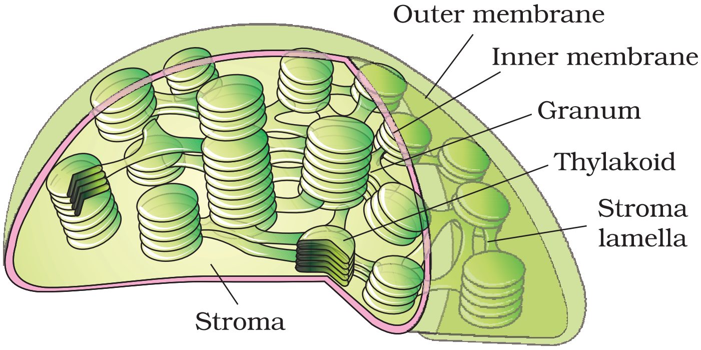


Figure 8.8 Sectional view of chloroplast

the **aleuroplasts** store proteins.

Majority of the chloroplasts of the green plants are found in the mesophyll cells of the leaves. These are lens-shaped, oval, spherical, discoid or even ribbon-like organelles having variable length (5-10µm) and width (2-4µm). Their number varies from 1 per cell of the *Chlamydomonas*, a green alga to 20-40 per cell in the mesophyll.

Like mitochondria, the chloroplasts are also double membrane bound. Of the two, the inner chloroplast membrane is relatively less permeable. The space limited by the inner membrane of the chloroplast is called the stroma. A number of organised flattened membranous sacs called the **thylakoids**, are present in the stroma (Figure 8.8). Thylakoids are arranged in stacks like the piles of coins called grana (singular: granum) or the intergranal thylakoids. In addition, there are flat membranous tubules called the stroma lamellae connecting the thylakoids of the different grana. The membrane of the thylakoids enclose a space called a lumen. The stroma of the chloroplast contains enzymes required for the synthesis of carbohydrates and proteins. It also contains small, double-stranded circular DNA molecules and ribosomes. Chlorophyll pigments are present in the thylakoids. The ribosomes of the chloroplasts are smaller (70S) than the cytoplasmic ribosomes (80S).

8.5.6 Ribosomes

Ribosomes are the granular structures first observed under the electron microscope as dense particles by George Palade (1953). They are composed of ribonucleic acid (RNA) and proteins and are not surrounded by any membrane.

The eukaryotic ribosomes are 80S while the prokaryotic ribosomes are 70S. Each ribosome has two subunits, larger and smaller subunits (Fig 8.9). The two subunits of 80S ribosomes are 60S and 40S while that of 70S ribosomes are 50S and 30S. Here ‘S’ (Svedberg’s Unit) stands for the sedimentation coefficient; it is indirectly a measure of density and size. Both 70S and 80S ribosomes are composed of two subunits.

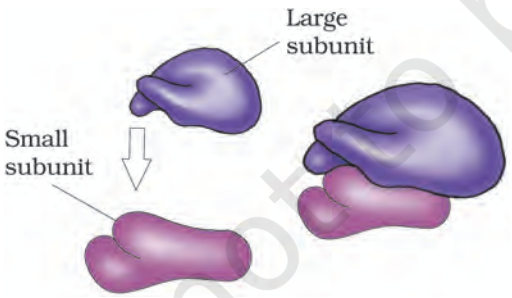
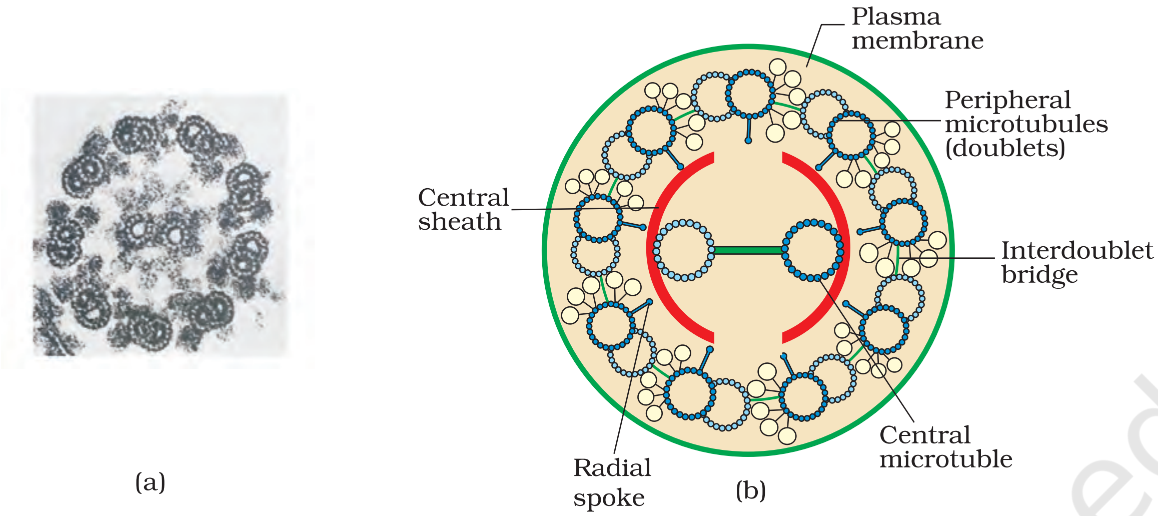


Figure 8.9 Ribosome

8.5.7 Cytoskeleton

An elaborate network of filamentous proteinaceous structures consisting of microtubules, microfilaments and intermediate filaments present in the cytoplasm is collectively referred to as the **cytoskeleton**. The cytoskeleton in a cell are involved in many functions such as mechanical support, motility, maintenance of the shape of the cell.



(a) (b)

Figure 8.10 Section of cilia/flagella showing different parts : (a) Electron micrograph (b) Diagrammatic representation of internal structure

8.5.8 Cilia and Flagella

Cilia (sing.: cilium) and flagella (sing.: flagellum) are hair-like outgrowths of the cell membrane. Cilia are small structures which work like oars, causing the movement of either the cell or the surrounding fluid. Flagella are comparatively longer and responsible for cell movement. The prokaryotic bacteria also possess flagella but these are structurally different from that of the eukaryotic flagella.

The electron microscopic study of a cilium or the flagellum show that they are covered with plasma membrane. Their core called the **axoneme,** possesses a number of microtubules running parallel to the long axis. The axoneme usually has nine doublets of radially arranged peripheral microtubules, and a pair of centrally located microtubules. Such an arrangement of axonemal microtubules is referred to as the 9+2 array (Figure 8.10). The central tubules are connected by bridges and is also enclosed by a central sheath, which is connected to one of the tubules of each peripheral doublets by a radial spoke. Thus, there are nine radial spokes. The peripheral doublets are also interconnected by linkers. Both the cilium and flagellum emerge from centriole-like structure called the basal bodies.

8.5.9 Centrosome and Centrioles

Centrosome is an organelle usually containing two cylindrical structures called centrioles. They are surrounded by amorphous pericentriolar materials. Both the centrioles in a centrosome lie perpendicular to each other in which each has an organisation like the cartwheel. They are made up of nine evenly spaced peripheral fibrils of tubulin protein. Each of the peripheral fibril is a triplet.The adjacent triplets are also linked. The central part of the proximal region of the centriole is also proteinaceous and called the **hub**, which is connected with tubules of the peripheral triplets by radial **spokes** made of protein. The centrioles form the basal body of cilia or flagella, and spindle fibres that give rise to spindle apparatus during cell division in animal cells.

8.5.10 Nucleus

Nucleus as a cell organelle was first described by Robert Brown as early as 1831. Later the material of the nucleus stained by the basic dyes was given the name **chromatin** by Flemming.

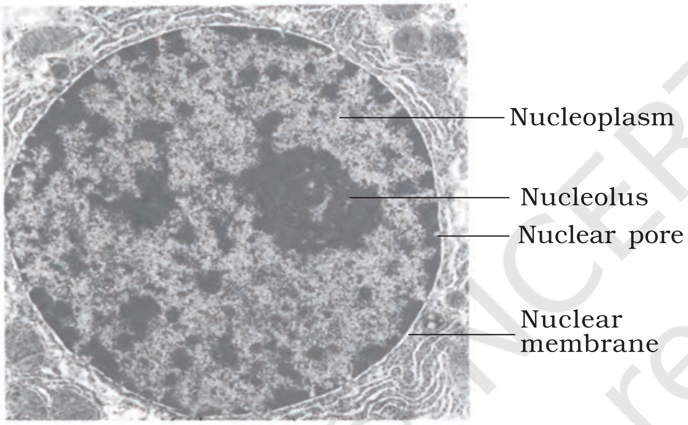


Figure 8.11 Structure of nucleus

The interphase nucleus (nucleus of a cell when it is not dividing) has highly extended and elaborate nucleoprotein fibres called chromatin, nuclear matrix and one or more spherical bodies called **nucleoli** (sing.: nucleolus) (Figure 8.11). Electron microscopy has revealed that the nuclear envelope, which consists of two parallel membranes with a space between (10 to 50 nm) called the **perinuclear space**, forms a barrier between the materials present inside the nucleus and that of the cytoplasm. The outer membrane usually remains continuous with the endoplasmic reticulum and also bears ribosomes on it. At a number of places the nuclear envelope is interrupted by minute pores, which are formed by the fusion of its two membranes. These nuclear pores are the passages through which movement of RNA and protein molecules takes place in both directions between the nucleus and the cytoplasm. Normally, there is only one nucleus per cell, variations in the number of nuclei are also frequently observed. *Can you recollect names of organisms that have more than one nucleus per cell?* Some mature cells even lack nucleus, e.g., erythrocytes of many mammals and sieve tube cells of vascular plants. *Would you consider these cells as 'living'?*

The nuclear matrix or the **nucleoplasm** contains nucleolus and chromatin. The nucleoli are spherical structures present in the nucleoplasm. The content of nucleolus is continuous with the rest of the nucleoplasm as it is not a membrane bound structure. It is a site for active ribosomal RNA synthesis. Larger and more numerous nucleoli are present in cells actively carrying out protein synthesis.

You may recall that the interphase nucleus has a loose and indistinct network of nucleoprotein fibres called chromatin. But during different stages of cell division, cells show structured **chromosomes** in place of the nucleus. Chromatin contains DNA and some basic proteins called **histones**, some non-histone proteins and also RNA. A single human cell has approximately two metre long thread of DNA distributed among its forty six (twenty three pairs) chromosomes. You will study the details of DNA packaging in the form of a chromosome in class XII.

Every chromosome (visible only in dividing cells) essentially has a primary constriction or the **centromere** on the sides of which disc shaped structures called **kinetochores** are present (Figure 8.12). Centromere holds two chromatids of a chromosome. Based on the position of the centromere, the chromosomes can be classified into four types (Figure 8.13). The **metacentric** chromosome has middle centromere forming two equal arms of the chromosome. The **sub-metacentric** chromosome has centromere slightly away from the middle of the chromosome resulting into one shorter arm and one longer arm. In case of **acrocentric** chromosome the centromere is situated close to its end forming one extremely short and one very long arm, whereas the **telocentric** chromosome has a terminal centromere.

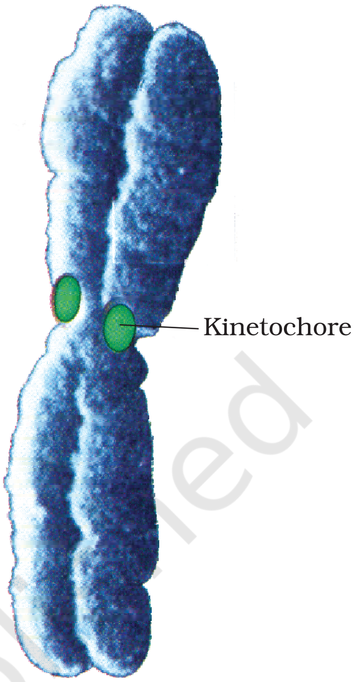


Figure 8.12 Chromosome with kinetochore

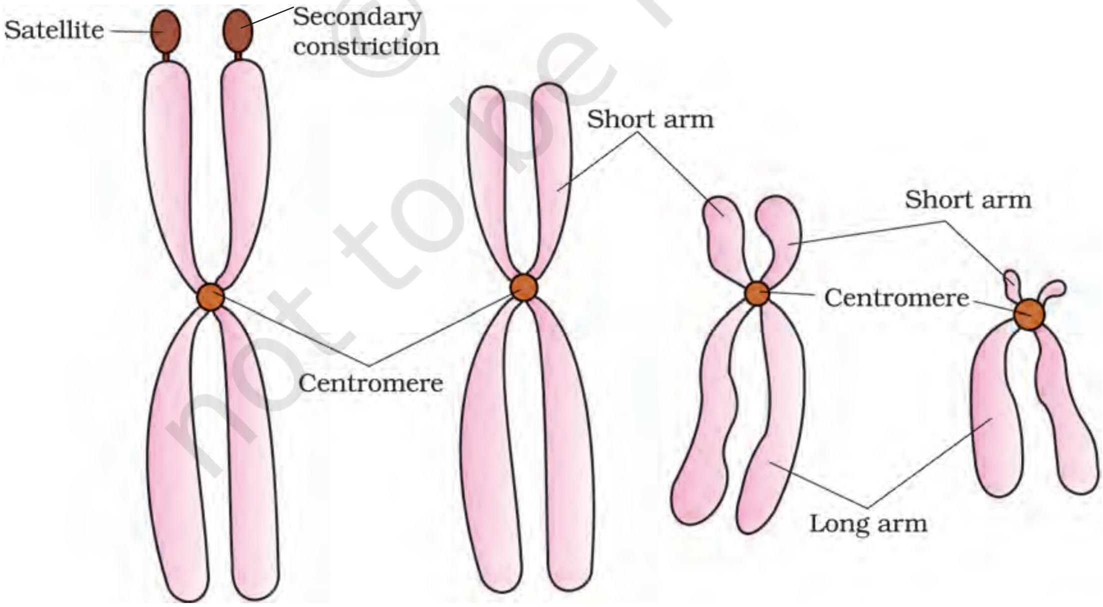


Figure 8.13 Types of chromosomes based on the position of centromere

Sometimes a few chromosomes have non-staining secondary constrictions at a constant location. This gives the appearance of a small fragment called the **satellite**.

8.5.11 Microbodies

Many membrane bound minute vesicles called microbodies that contain various enzymes, are present in both plant and animal cells.

SUMMARY

All organisms are made of cells or aggregates of cells. Cells vary in their shape, size and activities/functions. Based on the presence or absence of a membrane bound nucleus and other organelles, cells and hence organisms can be named as eukaryotic or prokaryotic.

A typical eukaryotic cell consists of a cell membrane, nucleus and cytoplasm. Plant cells have a cell wall outside the cell membrane. The plasma membrane is selectively permeable and facilitates transport of several molecules. The endomembrane system includes ER, golgi complex, lysosomes and vacuoles. All the cell organelles perform different but specific functions. Centrosome and centriole form the basal body of cilia and flagella that facilitate locomotion. In animal cells, centrioles also form spindle apparatus during cell division. Nucleus contains nucleoli and chromatin network. It not only controls the activities of organelles but also plays a major role in heredity.

Endoplasmic reticulum contains tubules or cisternae. They are of two types: rough and smooth. ER helps in the transport of substances, synthesis of proteins, lipoproteins and glycogen. The golgi body is a membranous organelle composed of flattened sacs. The secretions of cells are packed in them and transported from the cell. Lysosomes are single membrane structures containing enzymes for digestion of all types of macromolecules. Ribosomes are involved in protein synthesis. These occur freely in the cytoplasm or are associated with ER. Mitochondria help in oxidative phosphorylation and generation of adenosine triphosphate. They are bound by double membrane; the outer membrane is smooth and inner one folds into several cristae. Plastids are pigment containing organelles found in plant cells only. In plant cells, chloroplasts are responsible for trapping light energy essential for photosynthesis. The grana, in the plastid, is the site of light reactions and the stroma of dark reactions. The green coloured plastids are chloroplasts, which contain chlorophyll, whereas the other coloured plastids are chromoplasts, which may contain pigments like carotene and xanthophyll. The nucleus is enclosed by nuclear envelope, a double membrane structure with nuclear pores. The inner membrane encloses the nucleoplasm and the chromatin material. Thus, cell is the structural and functional unit of life.

EXERCISES

1. Which of the following is not correct?
   (a) Robert Brown discovered the cell.
   (b) Schleiden and Schwann formulated the cell theory.
   (c) Virchow explained that cells are formed from pre-existing cells.
   (d) A unicellular organism carries out its life activities within a single cell.
2. New cells generate from
   (a) bacterial fermentation (b) regeneration of old cells
   (c) pre-existing cells (d) abiotic materials
3. Match the following

Column I	Column II
(a) Cristae	(i) Flat membranous sacs in stroma
(b) Cisternae	(ii) Infoldings in mitochondria
(c) Thylakoids	(iii) Disc-shaped sacs in Golgi apparatus

4. Which of the following is correct:
   (a) Cells of all living organisms have a nucleus.
   (b) Both animal and plant cells have a well defined cell wall.
   (c) In prokaryotes, there are no membrane bound organelles.
   (d) Cells are formed *de novo* from abiotic materials.
5. What is a mesosome in a prokaryotic cell? Mention the functions that it performs.
6. How do neutral solutes move across the plasma membrane? Can the polar molecules also move across it in the same way? If not, then how are these transported across the membrane?
7. Name two cell-organelles that are double membrane bound. What are the characteristics of these two organelles? State their functions and draw labelled diagrams of both.
8. What are the characteristics of prokaryotic cells?
9. Multicellular organisms have division of labour. Explain.
10. Cell is the basic unit of life. Discuss in brief.
11. What are nuclear pores? State their function.
12. Both lysosomes and vacuoles are endomembrane structures, yet they differ in terms of their functions. Comment.
13. Describe the structure of the following with the help of labelled diagrams.
    (i) Nucleus (ii) Centrosome
14. What is a centromere? How does the position of centromere form the basis of classification of chromosomes. Support your answer with a diagram showing the position of centromere on different types of chromosomes.

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CHAPTER 9

BIOMOLECULES

9.1 How to Analyse Chemical Composition?
9.2 Primary and Secondary Metabolites
9.3 Biomacromolecules
9.4 Proteins
9.5 Polysaccharides
9.6 Nucleic Acids
9.7 Structure of Proteins
9.8 Enzymes

There is a wide diversity in living organisms in our biosphere. Now a question that arises in our minds is: Are all living organisms made of the same chemicals, i.e., elements and compounds? You have learnt in chemistry how elemental analysis is performed. If we perform such an analysis on a plant tissue, animal tissue or a microbial paste, we obtain a list of elements like carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and several others and their respective content per unit mass of a living tissue. If the same analysis is performed on a piece of earth's crust as an example of non-living matter, we obtain a similar list. What are the differences between the two lists? In absolute terms, no such differences could be made out. All the elements present in a sample of earth's crust are also present in a sample of living tissue. However, a closer examination reveals that the relative abundance of carbon and hydrogen with respect to other elements is higher in any living organism than in earth's crust (Table 9.1).

9.1 HOW TO ANALYSE CHEMICAL COMPOSITION?

We can continue asking in the same way, what type of organic compounds are found in living organisms? How does one go about finding the answer? To get an answer, one has to perform a chemical analysis. We can take any living tissue (a vegetable or a piece of liver, etc.) and grind it in trichloroacetic acid (Cl_3CCOOH) using a mortar and a pestle. We obtain a thick slurry. If we were to strain this through a cheesecloth or cotton we would obtain two fractions. One is called the filtrate or more technically, the acid-soluble pool, and the second, the retentate or the acid-insoluble fraction. Scientists have found thousands of organic compounds in the acid-soluble pool.

In higher classes you will learn about how to analyse a living tissue sample and identify a particular organic compound. It will suffice to say here that one extracts the compounds, then subjects the extract to various separation techniques till one has separated a compound from all other compounds. In other words, one isolates and purifies a compound. Analytical techniques, when applied to the compound give us an idea of the molecular formula and the probable structure of the compound. All the carbon compounds that we get from living tissues can be called 'biomolecules'. However, living organisms have also got inorganic elements and compounds in them. How do we know this? A slightly different but destructive experiment has to be done. One weighs a small amount of a living tissue (say a leaf or liver and this is called wet weight) and dry it. All the water, evaporates. The remaining material gives dry weight. Now if the tissue is fully burnt, all the carbon compounds are oxidised to gaseous form (CO_2, water vapour) and are removed. What is remaining is called 'ash'. This ash contains inorganic elements (like calcium, magnesium etc). Inorganic compounds like sulphate, phosphate, etc., are also seen in the acid-soluble fraction. Therefore elemental analysis gives elemental composition of living tissues in the form of hydrogen, oxygen, chlorine, carbon etc. while analysis for compounds gives an idea of the kind of organic (Figure 9.1) and inorganic constituents (Table 9.2) present in living tissues. From a chemistry point of view, one can identify functional groups like aldehydes, ketones, aromatic compounds, etc. But from a biological point of view, we shall classify them into amino acids, nucleotide bases, fatty acids etc.

TABLE 9.1 A Comparison of Elements Present in Non-living and Living Matter*

Element	**% Weight of**	
	Earth's crust	**Human body**
Hydrogen (H)	0.14	9.5
Carbon (C)	0.03	18.5
Oxygen (O)	46.6	65.0
Nitrogen (N)	very little	3.3
Sulphur (S)	0.03	0.3
Sodium (Na)	2.8	0.2
Calcium (Ca)	3.6	1.5
Magnesium (Mg)	2.1	0.1
Silicon (Si)	27.7	negligible

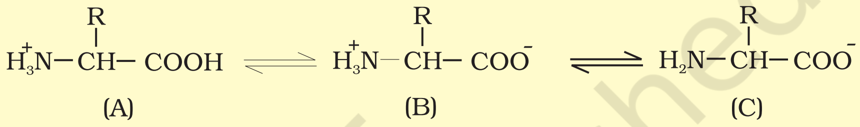
* Adapted from CNR Rao, *Understanding Chemistry*, Universities Press, Hyderabad.

TABLE 9.2 A List of Representative Inorganic Constituents of Living Tissues

Component	**Formula**
Sodium	Na^+
Potassium	K^+
Calcium	Ca^{++}
Magnesium	Mg^{++}
Water	H_2O
Compounds	$NaCl$, $CaCO_3$, PO_4^{3-} , SO_4^{2-}

Amino acids are organic compounds containing an amino group and an acidic group as substituents on the same carbon i.e., the α-carbon. Hence, they are called α-amino acids. They are substituted methanes. There are four substituent groups occupying the four valency positions. These are hydrogen, carboxyl group, amino group and a variable group designated as R group. Based on the nature of R group there are many amino acids. However, those which occur in proteins are only of twenty types. The R group in these proteinaceous amino acids could be a hydrogen (the amino acid is called glycine), a methyl group (alanine), hydroxy methyl (serine), etc. Three of the twenty are shown in Figure 9.1.

The chemical and physical properties of amino acids are essentially of the amino, carboxyl and the R functional groups. Based on number of amino and carboxyl groups, there are acidic (e.g., glutamic acid), basic (lysine) and neutral (valine) amino acids. Similarly, there are aromatic amino acids (tyrosine, phenylalanine, tryptophan). A particular property of amino acids is the ionizable nature of $–NH_2$ and $–COOH$ groups. Hence in solutions of different pH, the structure of amino acids changes.

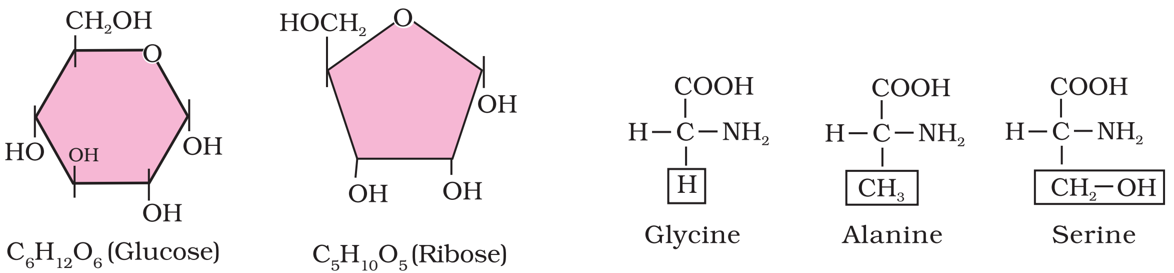


$$\underset{(A)}{H_3\overset{+}{N}-\overset{\overset{R}{|}}{C}H-COOH} \rightleftharpoons \underset{(B)}{H_3\overset{+}{N}-\overset{\overset{R}{|}}{C}H-COO^-} \rightleftharpoons \underset{(C)}{H_2N-\overset{\overset{R}{|}}{C}H-COO^-}$$

B is called zwitterionic form.

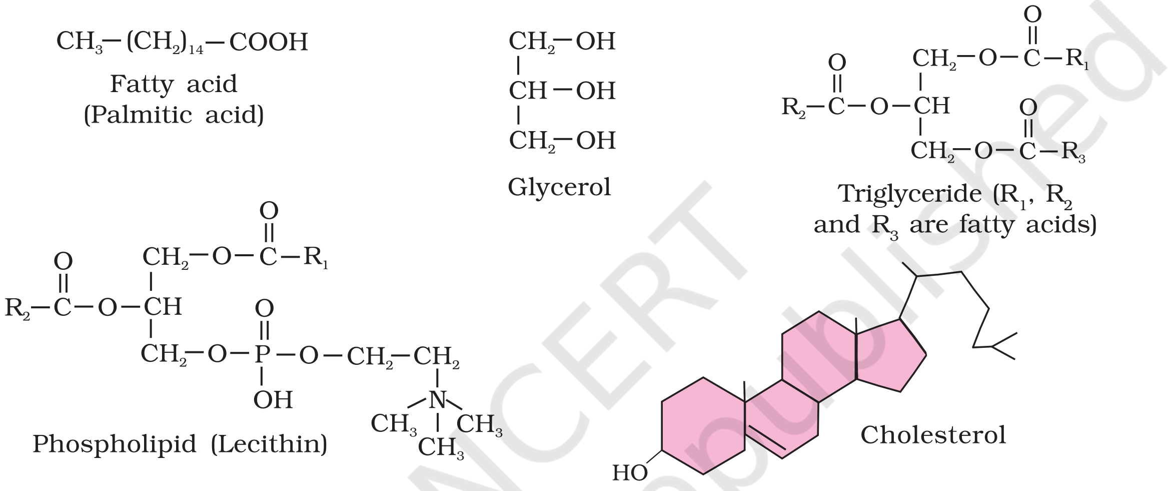
Lipids are generally water insoluble. They could be simple fatty acids. A fatty acid has a carboxyl group attached to an R group. The R group could be a methyl ($–CH_3$), or ethyl ($–C_2H_5$) or higher number of $–CH_2$ groups (1 carbon to 19 carbons). For example, palmitic acid has 16 carbons including carboxyl carbon. Arachidonic acid has 20 carbon atoms including the carboxyl carbon. Fatty acids could be saturated (without double bond) or unsaturated (with one or more C=C double bonds). Another simple lipid is glycerol which is trihydroxy propane. Many lipids have both glycerol and fatty acids. Here the fatty acids are found esterified with glycerol. They can be then monoglycerides, diglycerides and triglycerides. These are also called fats and oils based on melting point. Oils have lower melting point (e.g., gingelly oil) and hence remain as oil in winters. Can you identify a fat from the market? Some lipids have phosphorous and a phosphorylated organic compound in them. These are phospholipids. They are found in cell membrane. Lecithin is one example. Some tissues especially the neural tissues have lipids with more complex structures.

Living organisms have a number of carbon compounds in which heterocyclic rings can be found. Some of these are nitrogen bases – adenine, guanine, cytosine, uracil, and thymine. When found attached to a sugar, they are called nucleosides. If a phosphate group is also found esterified to the sugar they are called nucleotides. Adenosine, guanosine, thymidine, uridine and cytidine are nucleosides. Adenylic acid, thymidylic acid, guanylic acid, uridylic acid and cytidylic acid are nucleotides. Nucleic acids like DNA and RNA consist of nucleotides only. DNA and RNA function as genetic material.

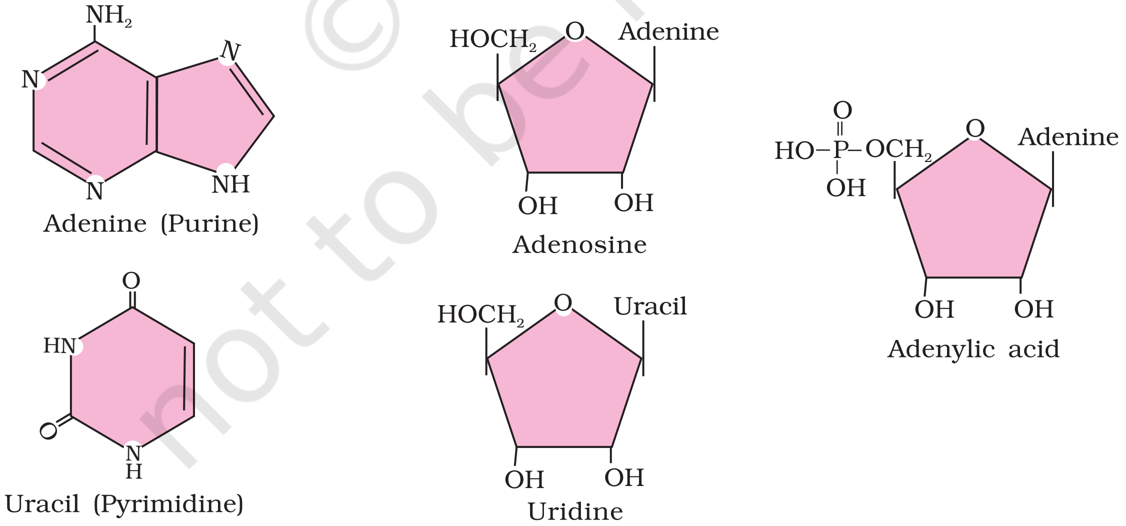

CH₂OH
O
HO
OH
OH
OH
$C_6H_{12}O_6$ (Glucose)
HOCH₂
O
OH
OH
OH
$C_5H_{10}O_5$ (Ribose)
COOH
H–C–NH₂
H
Glycine
COOH
H–C–NH₂
CH₃
Alanine
COOH
H–C–NH₂
CH₂–OH
Serine

Sugars (Carbohydrates)

Amino acids


$CH_3-(CH_2)_{14}-COOH$
Fatty acid
(Palmitic acid)
CH₂–OH
CH–OH
CH₂–OH
Glycerol
O
CH₂–O–C–R₁
O
R₂–C–O–CH
O
CH₂–O–C–R₃
Triglyceride (R₁, R₂ and R₃ are fatty acids)
O
CH₂–O–C–R₁
O
R₂–C–O–CH
O
CH₂–O–P–O–CH₂–CH₂
OH
N
CH₃ CH₃
CH₃
Phospholipid (Lecithin)
HO
Cholesterol

Fats and oils (lipids)


NH₂
N
N
N
NH
Adenine (Purine)
O
HN
O
N
H
Uracil (Pyrimidine)
HOCH₂
O
Adenine
OH
OH
Adenosine
HOCH₂
O
Uracil
OH
OH
Uridine
O
HO–P–OCH₂
OH
O
Adenine
OH
OH
Adenylic acid

Nitrogen bases

Nucleosides

Nucleotide

Figure 9.1 Diagrammatic representation of small molecular weight organic compounds in living tissues

9.2 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY METABOLITES

The most exciting aspect of chemistry deals with isolating thousands of compounds, small and big, from living organisms, determining their structure and if possible synthesising them.

If one were to make a list of biomolecules, such a list would have thousands of organic compounds including amino acids, sugars, etc. For reasons that are given in section 9.10, we can call these biomolecules as 'metabolites'. In animal tissues, one notices the presence of all such categories of compounds shown in Figure 9.1. These are primary metabolites. However, when one analyses plant, fungal and microbial cells, one would see thousands of compounds other than these primary metabolites, e.g. alkaloids, flavonoids, rubber, essential oils, antibiotics, coloured pigments, scents, gums, spices. These are called **secondary metabolites** (Table 9.3). While primary metabolites have identifiable functions and play known roles in normal physiologial processes, we do not at the moment, understand the role or functions of all the 'secondary metabolites' in host organisms. However, many of them are useful to 'human welfare' (e.g., rubber, drugs, spices, scents and pigments). Some secondary metabolites have ecological importance. In the later chapters and years you will learn more about this.

TABLE 9.3 Some Secondary Metabolites

Pigments	Carotenoids, Anthocyanins, etc.
Alkaloids	Morphine, Codeine, etc.
Terpenoides	Monoterpenes, Diterpenes etc.
Essential oils	Lemon grass oil, etc.
Toxins	Abrin, Ricin
Lectins	Concanavalin A
Drugs	Vinblastin, curcumin, etc.
Polymeric substances	Rubber, gums, cellulose

9.3 BIOMACROMOLECULES

There is one feature common to all those compounds found in the acid soluble pool. They have molecular weights ranging from 18 to around 800 daltons (Da) approximately.

The acid insoluble fraction, has only four types of organic compounds i.e., proteins, nucleic acids, polysaccharides and lipids. These classes of compounds with the exception of lipids, have molecular weights in the range of ten thousand daltons and above. For this very reason, biomolecules, i.e., chemical compounds found in living organisms are of two types. One, those which have molecular weights less than one thousand dalton and are usually referred to as micromolecules or simply biomolecules while those which are found in the acid insoluble fraction are called macromolecules or **biomacromolecules**.

The molecules in the insoluble fraction with the exception of lipids are polymeric substances. Then why do lipids, whose molecular weights do not exceed 800 Da, come under acid insoluble fraction, i.e., macromolecular fraction? Lipids are indeed small molecular weight compounds and are present not only as such but also arranged into structures like cell membrane and other membranes. When we grind a tissue, we are disrupting the cell structure. Cell membrane and other membranes are broken into pieces, and form vesicles which are not water soluble. Therefore, these membrane fragments in the form of vesicles get separated along with the acid insoluble pool and hence in the macromolecular fraction. Lipids are not strictly macromolecules.

The acid soluble pool represents roughly the cytoplasmic composition. The macromolecules from cytoplasm and organelles become the acid insoluble fraction. Together they represent the entire chemical composition of living tissues or organisms.

In summary if we represent the chemical composition of living tissue from abundance point of view and arrange them class-wise, we observe that water is the most abundant chemical in living organisms (Table 9.4).

TABLE 9.4 Average Composition of Cells

Component	% of the total cellular mass
Water	70-90
Proteins	10-15
Carbohydrates	3
Lipids	2
Nucleic acids	5-7
Ions	1

9.4 PROTEINS

Proteins are polypeptides. They are linear chains of amino acids linked by peptide bonds as shown in Figure 9.3.

Each protein is a polymer of amino acids. As there are 20 types of amino acids (e.g., alanine, cysteine, proline, tryptophan, lysine, etc.), a protein is a heteropolymer and not a homopolymer. A homopolymer has only one type of monomer repeating 'n' number of times. This information about the amino acid content is important as later in your nutrition lessons, you will learn that certain amino acids are essential for our health and they have to be supplied through our diet. Hence, dietary proteins are the source of essential amino acids. Therefore, amino acids can be essential or non-essential. The latter are those which our body can make, while we get essential amino acids through our diet/food. Proteins carry out many functions in living organisms, some transport nutrients across cell membrane, some fight infectious organisms, some are hormones, some are enzymes,

TABLE 9.5 Some Proteins and their Functions

Protein	Functions
Collagen	Intercellular ground substance
Trypsin	Enzyme
Insulin	Hormone
Antibody	Fights infectious agents
Receptor	Sensory reception (smell, taste, hormone, etc.)
GLUT-4	Enables glucose transport into cells

etc. (Table 9.5). Collagen is the most abundant protein in animal world and Ribulose bisphosphate Carboxylase-Oxygenase (RuBisCO) is the most abundant protein in the whole of the biosphere.

9.5 POLYSACCHARIDES

The acid insoluble pellet also has polysaccharides (carbohydrates) as another class of macromolecules. Polysaccharides are long chains of sugars. They are threads (literally a cotton thread) containing different monosaccharides as building blocks. For example, cellulose is a polymeric polysaccharide consisting of only one type of monosaccharide i.e., glucose. Cellulose is a homopolymer. Starch is a variant of this but present as a store house of energy in plant tissues. Animals have another variant called glycogen. Inulin is a polymer of fructose. In a polysaccharide chain (say glycogen), the right end is called the reducing end and the left end is called the non-reducing end. It has branches as shown in the form of a cartoon (Figure 9.2). Starch forms helical secondary structures. In fact, starch can hold I_2 molecules in the helical portion. The starch-I_2 is blue in colour. Cellulose does not contain complex helices and hence cannot hold I_2.

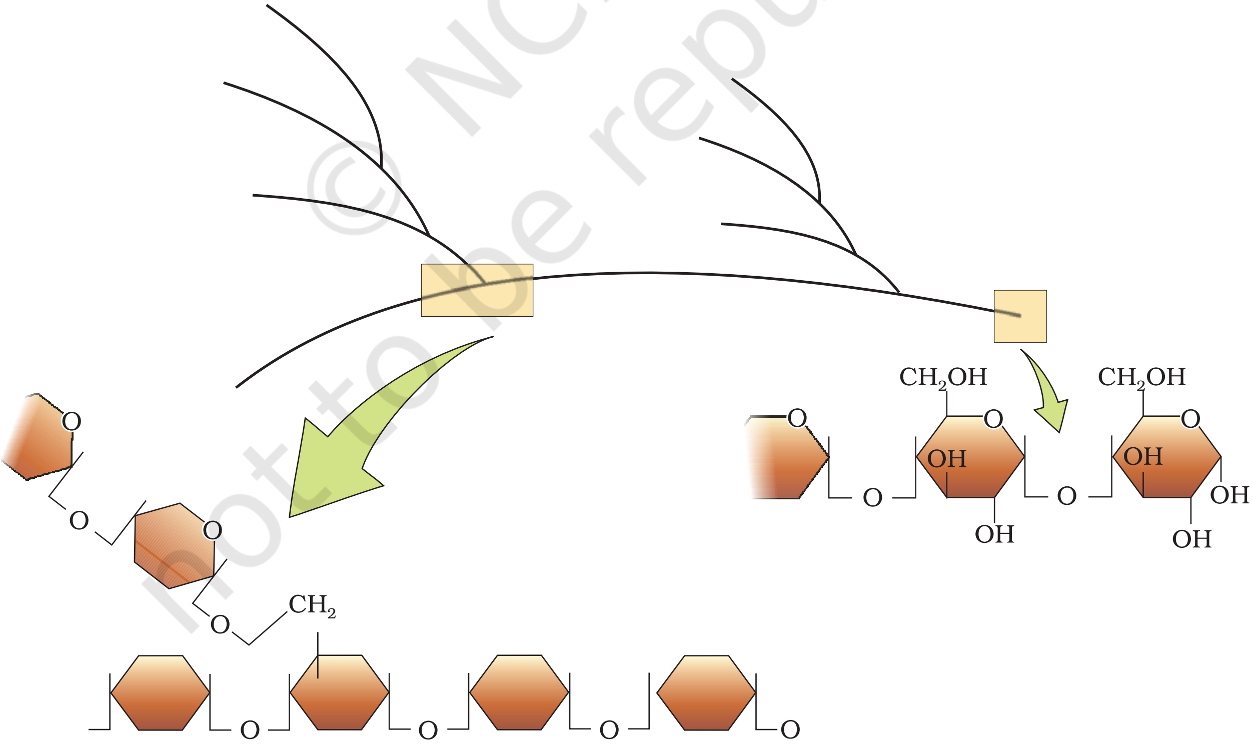


Figure 9.2 Diagrammatic representation of a portion of glycogen

Plant cell walls are made of cellulose. Paper made from plant pulp and cotton fibre is cellulosic. There are more complex polysaccharides in nature. They have as building blocks, amino-sugars and chemically modified sugars (e.g., glucosamine, N-acetyl galactosamine, etc.). Exoskeletons of arthropods, for example, have a complex polysaccharide called chitin. These complex polysaccharides are mostly homopolymers.

9.6 NUCLEIC ACIDS

The other type of macromolecule that one would find in the acid insoluble fraction of any living tissue is the nucleic acid. These are polynucleotides. Together with polysaccharides and polypeptides these comprise the true macromolecular fraction of any living tissue or cell. For nucleic acids, the building block is a nucleotide. A nucleotide has three chemically distinct components. One is a heterocyclic compound, the second is a monosaccharide and the third a phosphoric acid or phosphate.

As you notice in Figure 9.1, the heterocyclic compounds in nucleic acids are the nitrogenous bases named adenine, guanine, uracil, cytosine, and thymine. Adenine and Guanine are substituted purines while the rest are substituted pyrimidines. The skeletal heterocyclic ring is called as purine and pyrimidine respectively. The sugar found in polynucleotides is either ribose (a monosaccharide pentose) or 2' deoxyribose. A nucleic acid containing deoxyribose is called deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) while that which contains ribose is called ribonucleic acid (RNA).

9.7 STRUCTURE OF PROTEINS

Proteins, as mentioned earlier, are heteropolymers containing strings of amino acids. Structure of molecules means different things in different contexts. In inorganic chemistry, the structure invariably refers to the molecular formulae (e.g., NaCl, $MgCl_2$, etc.). Organic chemists always write a two dimensional view of the molecules while representing the structure of the molecules (e.g., benzene, naphthalene, etc.). Physicists conjure up the three dimensional views of molecular structures while biologists describe the protein structure at four levels. The sequence of amino acids i.e., the positional information in a protein – which is the first amino acid, which is second, and so on – is called the **primary structure** (Figure 9.3 a) of a protein. A protein is imagined as a line, the left end represented by the first amino acid and the right end represented by the last amino acid. The first amino acid is also called as N-terminal amino acid. The last amino acid is called the C-terminal amino acid. A protein thread does not exist throughout as an extended rigid rod. The thread is folded in the form of a helix (similar to a revolving staircase). Of course, only some portions of the protein thread are arranged in the form of a helix. In proteins, only right handed helices are observed. Other regions of the protein thread are folded into other forms in what is called the **secondary structure** (Fig. 9.3 b). In addition, the long protein chain is also folded upon itself like a hollow woolen ball, giving rise to the **tertiary structure** (Fig. 9.3 c). This gives us a 3-dimensional view of a protein. Tertiary structure is absolutely necessary for the many biological activities of proteins.

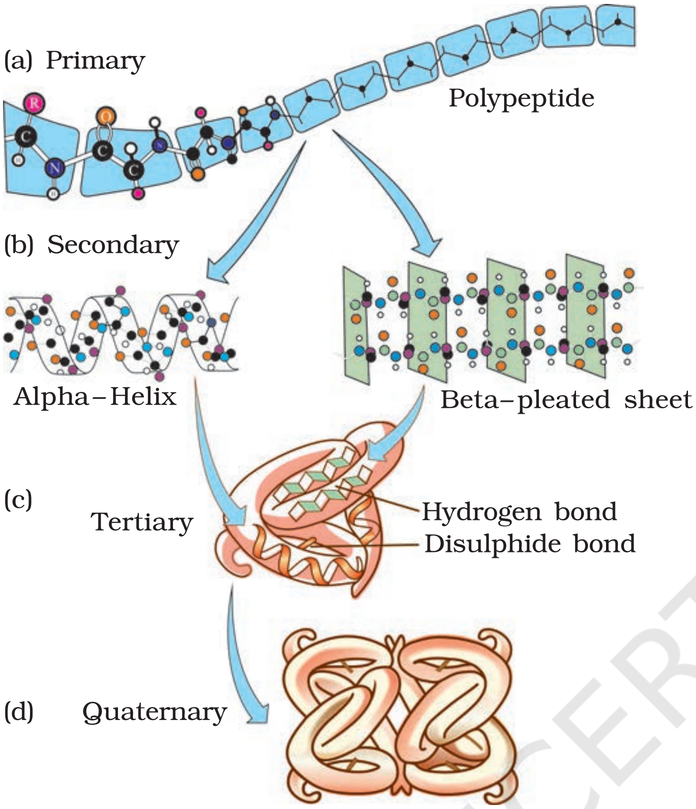


Figure 9.3 Various levels of Protein Structure

Some proteins are an assembly of more than one polypeptide or subunits. The manner in which these individual folded polypeptides or subunits are arranged with respect to each other (e.g. linear string of spheres, spheres arranged one upon each other in the form of a cube or plate etc.) is the architecture of a protein otherwise called the **quaternary structure** of a protein (Fig. 9.3 d). Adult human haemoglobin consists of 4 subunits. Two of these are identical to each other. Hence, two subunits of α type and two subunits of β type together constitute the human haemoglobin (Hb).

9.8 ENZYMES

Almost all enzymes are proteins. There are some nucleic acids that behave like enzymes. These are called ribozymes. One can depict an enzyme by a line diagram. An enzyme like any protein has a primary structure, i.e., amino acid sequence of the protein. An enzyme like any protein has the secondary and the tertiary structure. When you look at a tertiary structure upon itself, the chain criss-crosses itself and hence, many crevices or pockets are made. One such pocket is the 'active site'. An active site of an enzyme is a crevice or pocket into which the substrate fits. Thus enzymes, through their active site, catalyse reactions at a high rate. Enzyme catalysts differ from inorganic catalysts in many ways, but one major difference needs mention. Inorganic catalysts work efficiently at high temperatures and high pressures, while enzymes get damaged at high temperatures (say above 40°C). However, enzymes isolated from organisms who normally live under extremely high temperatures (e.g., hot vents and sulphur springs), are stable and retain their catalytic power even at high temperatures (upto 80°-90°C). Thermal stability is thus an important quality of such enzymes isolated from thermophilic organisms.

9.8.1 Chemical Reactions

How do we understand these enzymes? Let us first understand a chemical reaction. Chemical compounds undergo two types of changes. A physical change simply refers to a change in shape without breaking of bonds. This is a physical process. Another physical process is a change in state of matter: when ice melts into water, or when water becomes a vapour. These are also physical processes. However, when bonds are broken and new bonds are formed during transformation, this will be called a chemical reaction. For example:

$$Ba(OH)_2 + H_2SO_4 \rightarrow BaSO_4 + 2H_2O$$

is an inorganic chemical reaction. Similarly, hydrolysis of starch into glucose is an organic chemical reaction. Rate of a physical or chemical process refers to the amount of product formed per unit time. It can be expressed as:

$$\text{rate} = \frac{\delta P}{\delta t}$$

Rate can also be called velocity if the direction is specified. Rates of physical and chemical processes are influenced by temperature among other factors. A general rule of thumb is that rate doubles or decreases by half for every 10°C change in either direction. Catalysed reactions proceed at rates vastly higher than that of uncatalysed ones. When enzyme catalysed reactions are observed, the rate would be vastly higher than the same but uncatalysed reaction. For example

$$\underset{\text{carbon dioxide}}{CO_2} + \underset{\text{water}}{H_2O} \overset{\text{Carbonic anhydrase}}{\rightleftarrows} \underset{\text{carbonic acid}}{H_2CO_3}$$

In the absence of any enzyme this reaction is very slow, with about 200 molecules of H_2CO_3 being formed in an hour. However, by using the enzyme present within the cytoplasm called carbonic anhydrase, the reaction speeds dramatically with about 600,000 molecules being formed every second. The enzyme has accelerated the reaction rate by about 10 million times. The power of enzymes is incredible indeed!

There are thousands of types of enzymes each catalysing a unique chemical or metabolic reaction. A multistep chemical reaction, when each of the steps is catalysed by the same enzyme complex or different enzymes, is called a metabolic pathway. For example,

$$\text{Glucose} \rightarrow 2\ \text{Pyruvic acid}$$

$$C_6H_{12}O_6 + O_2 \rightarrow 2C_3H_4O_3 + 2H_2O$$

is actually a metabolic pathway in which glucose becomes pyruvic acid through ten different enzyme catalysed metabolic reactions. When you study respiration in Chapter 12, you will study these reactions. At this stage you should know that this very metabolic pathway with one or two additional reactions gives rise to a variety of metabolic end products. In our skeletal muscle, under anaerobic conditions, lactic acid is formed. Under normal aerobic conditions, pyruvic acid is formed. In yeast, during fermentation, the same pathway leads to the production of ethanol (alcohol). Hence, in different conditions different products are possible.

9.8.2 How do Enzymes bring about such High Rates of Chemical Conversions?

To understand this we should study enzymes a little more. We have already understood the idea of an 'active site'. The chemical or metabolic conversion refers to a reaction. The chemical which is converted into a product is called a 'substrate'. Hence enzymes, i.e. proteins with three dimensional structures including an 'active site', convert a substrate (S) into a product (P). Symbolically, this can be depicted as:

$$S \rightarrow P$$

It is now understood that the substrate 'S' has to bind the enzyme at its 'active site' within a given cleft or pocket. The substrate has to diffuse towards the 'active site'. There is thus, an obligatory formation of an 'ES' complex. E stands for enzyme. This complex formation is a transient phenomenon. During the state where substrate is bound to the enzyme active site, a new structure of the substrate called transition state structure is formed. Very soon, after the expected bond breaking/making is completed, the product is released from the active site. In other words, the structure of substrate gets transformed into the structure of product(s). The pathway of this transformation must go through the so-called

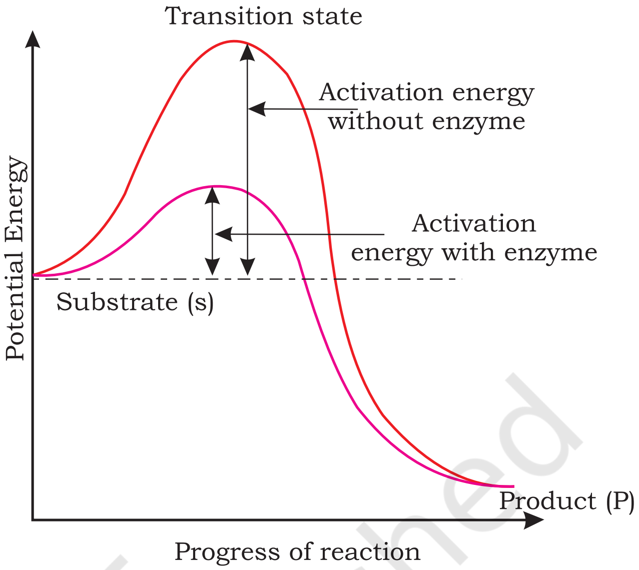


Figure 9.4 Concept of activation energy

transition state structure. There could be many more 'altered structural states' between the stable substrate and the product. Implicit in this statement is the fact that all other intermediate structural states are unstable. Stability is something related to energy status of the molecule or the structure. Hence, when we look at this pictorially through a graph it looks like something as in Figure 9.4.

The y-axis represents the potential energy content. The x-axis represents the progression of the structural transformation or states through the 'transition state'. You would notice two things. The energy level difference between S and P. If 'P' is at a lower level than 'S', the reaction is an exothermic reaction. One need not supply energy (by heating) in order to form the product. However, whether it is an exothermic or spontaneous reaction or an endothermic or energy requiring reaction, the 'S' has to go through a much higher energy state or transition state. The difference in average energy content of 'S' from that of this transition state is called 'activation energy'.

Enzymes eventually bring down this energy barrier making the transition of 'S' to 'P' more easy.

9.8.3 Nature of Enzyme Action

Each enzyme (E) has a substrate (S) binding site in its molecule so that a highly reactive enzyme-substrate complex (ES) is produced. This complex is short-lived and dissociates into its product(s) P and the unchanged enzyme with an intermediate formation of the enzyme-product complex (EP).

The formation of the ES complex is essential for catalysis.

$$E + S \qquad ES \longrightarrow EP \longrightarrow E + P$$

The catalytic cycle of an enzyme action can be described in the following steps:

1. First, the substrate binds to the active site of the enzyme, fitting into the active site.
2. The binding of the substrate induces the enzyme to alter its shape, fitting more tightly around the substrate.
3. The active site of the enzyme, now in close proximity of the substrate breaks the chemical bonds of the substrate and the new enzyme- product complex is formed.

4. The enzyme releases the products of the reaction and the free enzyme is ready to bind to another molecule of the substrate and run through the catalytic cycle once again.

9.8.4 Factors Affecting Enzyme Activity

The activity of an enzyme can be affected by a change in the conditions which can alter the tertiary structure of the protein. These include temperature, pH, change in substrate concentration or binding of specific chemicals that regulate its activity.

Temperature and pH

Enzymes generally function in a narrow range of temperature and pH (Figure 9.5). Each enzyme shows its highest activity at a particular temperature and pH called the optimum temperature and optimum pH. Activity declines both below and above the optimum value. Low temperature preserves the enzyme in a temporarily inactive state whereas high temperature destroys enzymatic activity because proteins are denatured by heat.

Concentration of Substrate

With the increase in substrate concentration, the velocity of the enzymatic reaction rises at first. The reaction ultimately reaches a maximum velocity (V_{max}) which is not exceeded by any further rise in concentration of the substrate. This is because the enzyme molecules are fewer than the substrate molecules and after saturation of these molecules, there are no free enzyme molecules to bind with the additional substrate molecules (Figure 9.5).

The activity of an enzyme is also sensitive to the presence of specific chemicals that bind to the enzyme. When the binding of the chemical

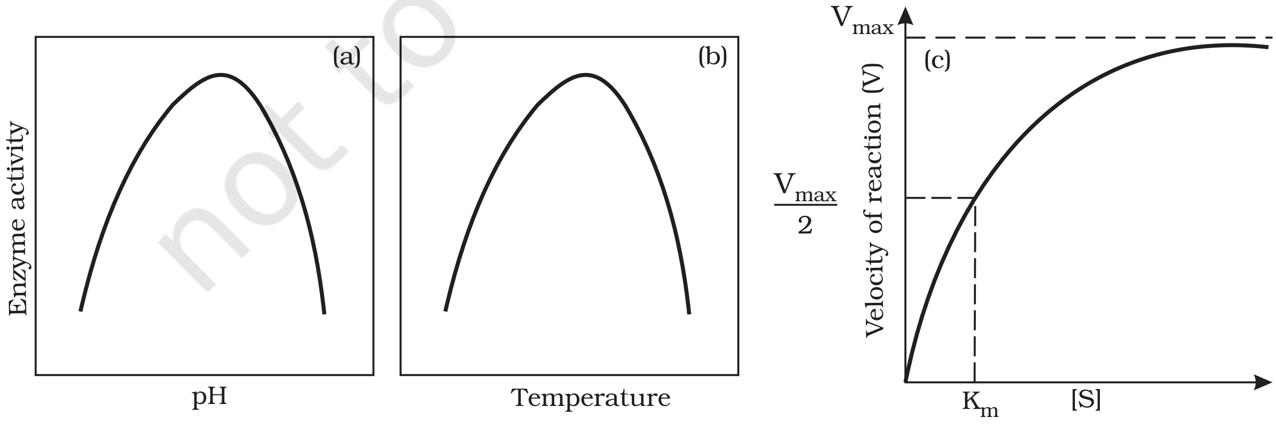


Figure 9.5 Effect of change in : (a) pH (b) Temperature and (c) Concentration of substrate on enzyme activity

shuts off enzyme activity, the process is called **inhibition** and the chemical is called an **inhibitor**.

When the inhibitor closely resembles the substrate in its molecular structure and inhibits the activity of the enzyme, it is known as **competitive inhibitor**. Due to its close structural similarity with the substrate, the inhibitor competes with the substrate for the substrate-binding site of the enzyme. Consequently, the substrate cannot bind and as a result, the enzyme action declines, e.g., inhibition of succinic dehydrogenase by malonate which closely resembles the substrate succinate in structure. Such competitive inhibitors are often used in the control of bacterial pathogens.

9.8.5 Classification and Nomenclature of Enzymes

Thousands of enzymes have been discovered, isolated and studied. Most of these enzymes have been classified into different groups based on the type of reactions they catalyse. Enzymes are divided into 6 classes each with 4-13 subclasses and named accordingly by a four-digit number.

Oxidoreductases/dehydrogenases: Enzymes which catalyse oxidoreduction between two substrates S and S' e.g.,

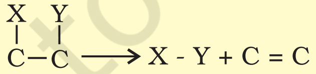
$$\text{S reduced} + \text{S' oxidised} \longrightarrow \text{S oxidised} + \text{S' reduced.}$$

Transferases: Enzymes catalysing a transfer of a group, G (other than hydrogen) between a pair of substrate S and S' e.g.,

$$\text{S - G} + \text{S'} \longrightarrow \text{S} + \text{S' - G}$$

Hydrolases: Enzymes catalysing hydrolysis of ester, ether, peptide, glycosidic, C-C, C-halide or P-N bonds.

Lyases: Enzymes that catalyse removal of groups from substrates by mechanisms other than hydrolysis leaving double bonds.



$$\overset{\displaystyle X}{\overset{|}{\text{C}}}-\overset{\displaystyle Y}{\overset{|}{\text{C}}} \longrightarrow \text{X - Y} + \text{C} = \text{C}$$

Isomerases: Includes all enzymes catalysing inter-conversion of optical, geometric or positional isomers.

Ligases: Enzymes catalysing the linking together of 2 compounds, e.g., enzymes which catalyse joining of C-O, C-S, C-N, P-O etc. bonds.

9.8.6 Co-factors

Enzymes are composed of one or several polypeptide chains. However, there are a number of cases in which non-protein constituents called co-factors are bound to the the enzyme to make the enzyme catalytically

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active. In these instances, the protein portion of the enzymes is called the apoenzyme. Three kinds of cofactors may be identified: prosthetic groups, co-enzymes and metal ions.

Prosthetic groups are organic compounds and are distinguished from other cofactors in that they are tightly bound to the apoenzyme. For example, in peroxidase and catalase, which catalyze the breakdown of hydrogen peroxide to water and oxygen, haem is the prosthetic group and it is a part of the active site of the enzyme.

Co-enzymes are also organic compounds but their association with the apoenzyme is only transient, usually occurring during the course of catalysis. Furthermore, co-enzymes serve as co-factors in a number of different enzyme catalyzed reactions. The essential chemical components of many coenzymes are vitamins, e.g., coenzyme nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD) and NADP contain the vitamin niacin.

A number of enzymes require metal ions for their activity which form coordination bonds with side chains at the active site and at the same time form one or more cordination bonds with the substrate, e.g., zinc is a cofactor for the proteolytic enzyme carboxypeptidase.

Catalytic activity is lost when the co-factor is removed from the enzyme which testifies that they play a crucial role in the catalytic activity of the enzyme.

SUMMARY

Although there is a bewildering diversity of living organisms, their chemical composition and metabolic reactions appear to be remarkably similar. The elemental composition of living tissues and non-living matter appear also to be similar when analysed qualitatively. However, a closer examination reveals that the relative abundance of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen is higher in living systems when compared to inanimate matter. The most abundant chemical in living organisms is water. There are thousands of small molecular weight (<1000 Da) biomolecules. Amino acids, monosaccharide and disaccharide sugars, fatty acids, glycerol, nucleotides, nucleosides and nitrogen bases are some of the organic compounds seen in living organisms. There are 20 types of amino acids and 5 types of nucleotides. Fats and oils are glycerides in which fatty acids are esterified to glycerol. Phospholipids contain, in addition, a phosphorylated nitrogenous compound.

Only three types of macromolecules, i.e., proteins, nucleic acids and polysaccharides are found in living systems. Lipids, because of their association with membranes separate in the macromolecular fraction. Biomacromolecules are polymers. They are made of building blocks which are different. Proteins are heteropolymers made of amino acids. Nucleic acids (RNA and DNA) are composed of nucleotides. Biomacromolecules have a hierarchy of structures –

primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary. Nucleic acids serve as genetic material. Polysaccharides are components of cell wall in plants, fungi and also of the exoskeleton of arthropods. They also are storage forms of energy (e.g., starch and glycogen). Proteins serve a variety of cellular functions. Many of them are enzymes, some are antibodies, some are receptors, some are hormones and some others are structural proteins. Collagen is the most abundant protein in animal world and Ribulose bisphosphate Carboxylase-Oxygenase (RuBisCO) is the most abundant protein in the whole of the biosphere.

Enzymes are proteins which catalyse biochemical reactions in the cells. Ribozymes are nucleic acids with catalytic power. Proteinaceous enzymes exhibit substrate specificity, require optimum temperature and pH for maximal activity. They are denatured at high temperatures. Enzymes lower activation energy of reactions and enhance greatly the rate of the reactions. Nucleic acids carry hereditary information and are passed on from parental generation to progeny.

EXERCISES

1. What are macromolecules? Give examples.
2. What is meant by tertiary structure of proteins?
3. Find and write down structures of 10 interesting small molecular weight biomolecules. Find if there is any industry which manufactures the compounds by isolation. Find out who are the buyers.
4. Find out and make a list of proteins used as therapeutic agents. Find other applications of proteins (e.g., Cosmetics etc.)
5. Explain the composition of triglyceride.
6. Can you attempt building models of biomolecules using commercially available atomic models (Ball and Stick models).
7. Draw the structure of the amino acid, alanine.
8. What are gums made of? Is Fevicol different?
9. Find out a qualitative test for proteins, fats and oils, amino acids and test any fruit juice, saliva, sweat and urine for them.
10. Find out how much cellulose is made by all the plants in the biosphere and compare it with how much of paper is manufactured by man and hence what is the consumption of plant material by man annually. What a loss of vegetation!
11. Describe the important properties of enzymes.

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CHAPTER 10

CELL CYCLE AND CELL DIVISION

10.1 Cell Cycle
10.2 M Phase
10.3 Significance of Mitosis
10.4 Meiosis
10.5 Significance of Meiosis

Are you aware that all organisms, even the largest, start their life from a single cell? You may wonder how a single cell then goes on to form such large organisms. Growth and reproduction are characteristics of cells, indeed of all living organisms. All cells reproduce by dividing into two, with each parental cell giving rise to two daughter cells each time they divide. These newly formed daughter cells can themselves grow and divide, giving rise to a new cell population that is formed by the growth and division of a single parental cell and its progeny. In other words, such cycles of growth and division allow a single cell to form a structure consisting of millions of cells.

10.1 CELL CYCLE

Cell division is a very important process in all living organisms. During the division of a cell, DNA replication and cell growth also take place. All these processes, i.e., cell division, DNA replication, and cell growth, hence, have to take place in a coordinated way to ensure correct division and formation of progeny cells containing intact genomes. The sequence of events by which a cell duplicates its genome, synthesises the other constituents of the cell and eventually divides into two daughter cells is termed **cell cycle.** Although cell growth (in terms of cytoplasmic increase) is a continuous process, DNA synthesis occurs only during one specific stage in the cell cycle. The replicated chromosomes (DNA) are then distributed to daughter nuclei by a complex series of events during cell division. These events are themselves under genetic control.

10.1.1 Phases of Cell Cycle

A typical eukaryotic cell cycle is illustrated by human cells in culture. These cells divide once in approximately every 24 hours (Figure 10.1). However, this duration of cell cycle can vary from organism to organism and also from cell type to cell type. Yeast for example, can progress through the cell cycle in only about 90 minutes.

The cell cycle is divided into two basic phases:

- **Interphase**
- **M Phase (Mitosis phase)**

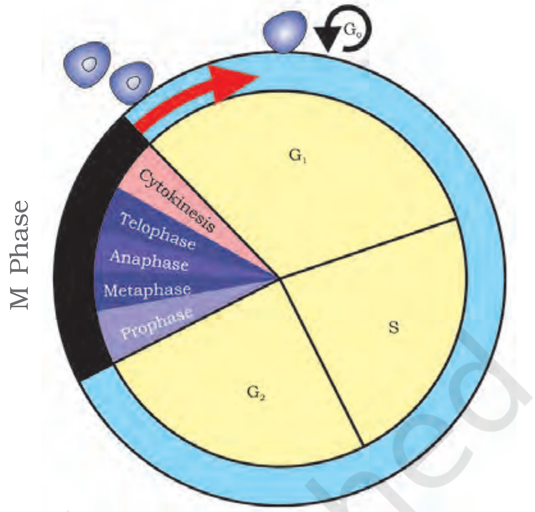

Figure 10.1 A diagrammatic view of cell cycle indicating formation of two cells from one cell

The M Phase represents the phase when the actual cell division or mitosis occurs and the interphase represents the phase between two successive M phases. It is significant to note that in the 24 hour average duration of cell cycle of a human cell, cell division proper lasts for only about an hour. The interphase lasts more than 95% of the duration of cell cycle.

The M Phase starts with the nuclear division, corresponding to the separation of daughter chromosomes **(karyokinesis)** and usually ends with division of cytoplasm **(cytokinesis)**. The interphase, though called the resting phase, is the time during which the cell is preparing for division by undergoing both cell growth and DNA replication in an orderly manner. The interphase is divided into three further phases:

- **G_1 phase (Gap 1)**
- **S phase (Synthesis)**
- **G_2 phase (Gap 2)**

G_1 phase corresponds to the interval between mitosis and initiation of DNA replication. During G_1 phase, the cell is metabolically active and continuously grows but does not replicate its DNA. S or **synthesis** phase marks the period during which DNA synthesis or replication takes place. During this time the amount of DNA per cell doubles. If the initial amount of DNA is denoted as 2C then it increases to 4C. However, there is no increase in the chromosome number; if the cell had diploid or 2n number of chromosomes at G_1, even after S phase the number of chromosomes remains the same, i.e., 2n.

In animal cells, during the S phase, DNA replication begins in the nucleus, and the centriole duplicates in the cytoplasm. During the G_2 phase, proteins are synthesised in preparation for mitosis while cell growth continues.

How do plants and animals continue to grow all their lives? Do all cells in a plant divide all the time? Do you think all cells continue to divide in all plants and animals? Can you tell the name and the location of tissues having cells that divide all their life in higher plants? Do animals have similar meristematic tissues?

You have studied mitosis in onion root tip cells. It has 16 chromosomes in each cell. Can you tell how many chromosomes will the cell have at G_1 phase, after S phase, and after M phase? Also, what will be the DNA content of the cells at G_1, after S and at G_2, if the content after M phase is 2C?

Some cells in the adult animals do not appear to exhibit division (e.g., heart cells) and many other cells divide only occasionally, as needed to replace cells that have been lost because of injury or cell death. These cells that do not divide further exit G_1 phase to enter an inactive stage called ***quiescent stage (G_0)*** of the cell cycle. Cells in this stage remain metabolically active but no longer proliferate unless called on to do so depending on the requirement of the organism.

In animals, mitotic cell division is only seen in the diploid somatic cells. However, there are few exceptions to this where haploid cells divide by mitosis, for example, male honey bees. Against this, the plants can show mitotic divisions in both haploid and diploid cells. From your recollection of examples of alternation of generations in plants (Chapter 3) identify plant species and stages at which mitosis is seen in haploid cells.

10.2 M PHASE

This is the most dramatic period of the cell cycle, involving a major reorganisation of virtually all components of the cell. Since the number of chromosomes in the parent and progeny cells is the same, it is also called as ***equational division***. Though for convenience mitosis has been divided into four stages of nuclear division (karyokinesis), it is very essential to understand that cell division is a progressive process and very clear-cut lines cannot be drawn between various stages. Karyokinesis involves following four stages:

- ***Prophase***
- ***Metaphase***
- ***Anaphase***
- ***Telophase***

10.2.1 Prophase

Prophase which is the first stage of karyokinesis of mitosis follows the S and G_2 phases of interphase. In the S and G_2 phases, the new DNA molecules formed are not distinct but intertwined. Prophase is marked by the initiation of condensation of chromosomal material. The chromosomal material becomes untangled during the process of chromatin condensation (Figure 10.2 a). The centrosome, which had undergone duplication during S phase of interphase, now begins to move towards opposite poles of the cell. The completion of prophase can thus be marked by the following characteristic events:

- Chromosomal material condenses to form compact mitotic chromosomes. Chromosomes are seen to be composed of two chromatids attached together at the centromere.
- Centrosome which had undergone duplication during interphase, begins to move towards opposite poles of the cell. Each centrosome radiates out microtubules called asters. The two asters together with spindle fibres forms mitotic apparatus.

Cells at the end of prophase, when viewed under the microscope, do not show golgi complexes, endoplasmic reticulum, nucleolus and the nuclear envelope.

10.2.2 Metaphase

The complete disintegration of the nuclear envelope marks the start of the second phase of mitosis, hence the chromosomes are spread through the cytoplasm of the cell. By this stage, condensation of chromosomes is completed and they can be observed clearly under the microscope. This then, is the stage at which morphology of chromosomes is most easily studied. At this stage, metaphase chromosome is made up of two sister chromatids, which are held together by the centromere (Figure 10.2 b). Small disc-shaped structures at the surface of the centromeres are called kinetochores. These structures serve as the sites of attachment of spindle fibres to the chromosomes that are moved into position at the centre of the cell. Hence, the metaphase is characterised by all the chromosomes coming to lie at the equator with one chromatid of each chromosome connected by its kinetochore to spindle fibres from one pole and its sister chromatid connected by its kinetochore to spindle fibres from the opposite pole (Figure 10.2 b). The plane of alignment of the chromosomes at metaphase is referred to as the **metaphase plate.** The key features of metaphase are:

- Spindle fibres attach to kinetochores of chromosomes.
- Chromosomes are moved to spindle equator and get aligned along metaphase plate through spindle fibres to both poles.

10.2.3 Anaphase

At the onset of anaphase, each chromosome arranged at the metaphase plate is split simultaneously and the two daughter chromatids, now referred to as daughter chromosomes of the future daughter nuclei, begin their migration towards the two opposite poles. As each chromosome moves away from the equatorial plate, the centromere of each chromosome remains directed towards the pole and hence at the leading edge, with the arms of the chromosome trailing behind (Figure 10.2 c). Thus, anaphase stage is characterised by

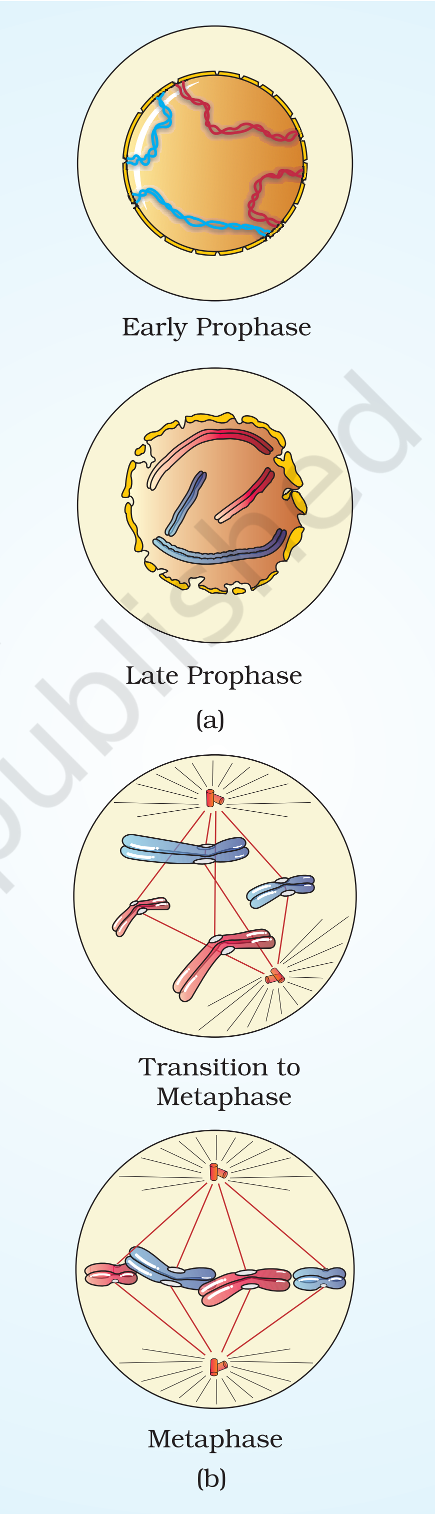

Figure 10.2 a and b : A diagrammatic view of stages in mitosis

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the following key events:

- Centromeres split and chromatids separate.
- Chromatids move to opposite poles.

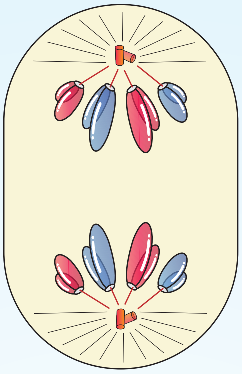
10.2.4 Telophase

At the beginning of the final stage of karyokinesis, i.e., telophase, the chromosomes that have reached their respective poles decondense and lose their individuality. The individual chromosomes can no longer be seen and each set of chromatin material tends to collect at each of the two poles (Figure 10.2 d). This is the stage which shows the following key events:

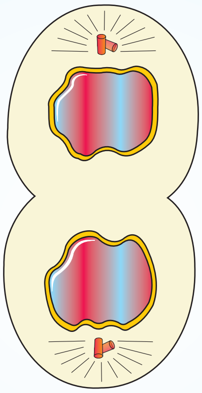
- Chromosomes cluster at opposite spindle poles and their identity is lost as discrete elements.
- Nuclear envelope develops around the chromosome clusters at each pole forming two daughter nuclei.
- Nucleolus, golgi complex and ER reform.

10.2.5 Cytokinesis

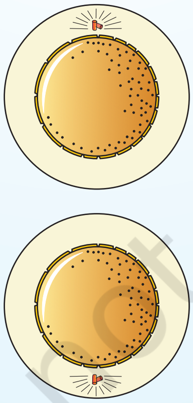
Mitosis accomplishes not only the segregation of duplicated chromosomes into daughter nuclei (karyokinesis), but the cell itself is divided into two daughter cells by the separation of cytoplasm called cytokinesis at the end of which cell division gets completed (Figure 10.2 e). In an animal cell, this is achieved by the appearance of a furrow in the plasma membrane. The furrow gradually deepens and ultimately joins in the centre dividing the cell cytoplasm into two. Plant cells however, are enclosed by a relatively inextensible cell wall, thererfore they undergo cytokinesis by a different mechanism. In plant cells, wall formation starts in the centre of the cell and grows outward to meet the existing lateral walls. The formation of the new cell wall begins with the formation of a simple precursor, called the **cell-plate** that represents the middle lamella between the walls of two adjacent cells. At the time of cytoplasmic division, organelles like mitochondria and plastids get distributed between the two daughter cells. In some organisms karyokinesis is not followed by cytokinesis as a result of which multinucleate condition arises leading to the formation of syncytium (e.g., liquid endosperm in coconut).



Anaphase
(c)



Telophase
(d)



Interphase
(e)

Figure 10.2 c to e : A diagrammatic view of stages in Mitosis

10.3 Significance of Mitosis

Mitosis or the equational division is usually restricted to the diploid cells only. However, in some lower plants and in some social insects haploid cells also divide by mitosis. It is very essential to understand the significance of this division in the life of an organism. Are you aware of some examples where you have studied about haploid and diploid insects?

Mitosis usually results in the production of diploid daughter cells with identical genetic complement. The growth of multicellular organisms is due to mitosis. Cell growth results in disturbing the ratio between the nucleus and the cytoplasm. It therefore becomes essential for the cell to divide to restore the nucleo-cytoplasmic ratio. A very significant contribution of mitosis is cell repair. The cells of the upper layer of the epidermis, cells of the lining of the gut, and blood cells are being constantly replaced. Mitotic divisions in the meristematic tissues – the apical and the lateral cambium, result in a continuous growth of plants throughout their life.

10.4 MEIOSIS

The production of offspring by sexual reproduction includes the fusion of two gametes, each with a complete haploid set of chromosomes. Gametes are formed from specialised diploid cells. This specialised kind of cell division that reduces the chromosome number by half results in the production of haploid daughter cells. This kind of division is called **meiosis.** Meiosis ensures the production of haploid phase in the life cycle of sexually reproducing organisms whereas fertilisation restores the diploid phase. We come across meiosis during gametogenesis in plants and animals. This leads to the formation of haploid gametes. The key features of meiosis are as follows:

- Meiosis involves two sequential cycles of nuclear and cell division called **meiosis I** and **meiosis II** but only a single cycle of DNA replication.
- Meiosis I is initiated after the parental chromosomes have replicated to produce identical sister chromatids at the S phase.
- Meiosis involves pairing of homologous chromosomes and recombination between non-sister chromatids of homologous chromosomes.
- Four haploid cells are formed at the end of meiosis II.

Meiotic events can be grouped under the following phases:

Meiosis I	**Meiosis II**
Prophase I	Prophase II
Metaphase I	Metaphase II
Anaphase I	Anaphase II
Telophase I	Telophase II

10.4.1 Meiosis I

Prophase I: Prophase of the first meiotic division is typically longer and more complex when compared to prophase of mitosis. It has been further subdivided into the following five phases based on chromosomal behaviour, i.e., Leptotene, Zygotene, Pachytene, Diplotene and Diakinesis.

During **leptotene** stage the chromosomes become gradually visible under the light microscope. The compaction of chromosomes continues throughout leptotene. This is followed by the second stage of prophase I called **zygotene**. During this stage, chromosomes start pairing together and this process of association is called synapsis. Such paired chromosomes are called homologous chromosomes. Electron micrographs of this stage, indicate that chromosome synapsis is accompanied by the formation of complex structure called **synaptonemal complex.** The complex formed by a pair of synapsed homologous chromosomes is called a **bivalent** or a tetrad. However, these are more clearly visible at the next stage. The first two stages of prophase I are relatively short-lived compared to the next stage that is **pachytene**. During this stage, the four chromatids of each bivalent chromosomes becomes distinct and clearly appear as tetrads. This stage is characterised by the appearance of recombination nodules, the sites at which crossing over occurs between non-sister chromatids of the homologous chromosomes. Crossing over is the exchange of genetic material between two homologous chromosomes. Crossing over is also an enzyme-mediated process and the enzyme involved is called recombinase. Crossing over leads to recombination of genetic material on the two chromosomes. Recombination between homologous chromosomes is completed by the end of pachytene, leaving the chromosomes linked at the sites of crossing over.

The beginning of **diplotene** is recognised by the dissolution of the synaptonemal complex and the tendency of the recombined homologous chromosomes of the bivalents to separate from each other except at the sites of crossovers. These X-shaped structures, are called **chiasmata.** In oocytes of some vertebrates, diplotene can last for months or years.

The final stage of meiotic prophase I is **diakinesis.** This is marked by terminalisation of chiasmata. During this phase the chromosomes are fully condensed and the meiotic spindle is assembled to prepare the homologous chromosomes for separation. By the end of diakinesis, the nucleolus disappears and the nuclear envelope also breaks down. Diakinesis represents transition to metaphase.

Metaphase I: The bivalent chromosomes align on the equatorial plate (Figure 10.3). The microtubules from the opposite poles of the spindle attach to the kinetochore of homologous chromosomes.

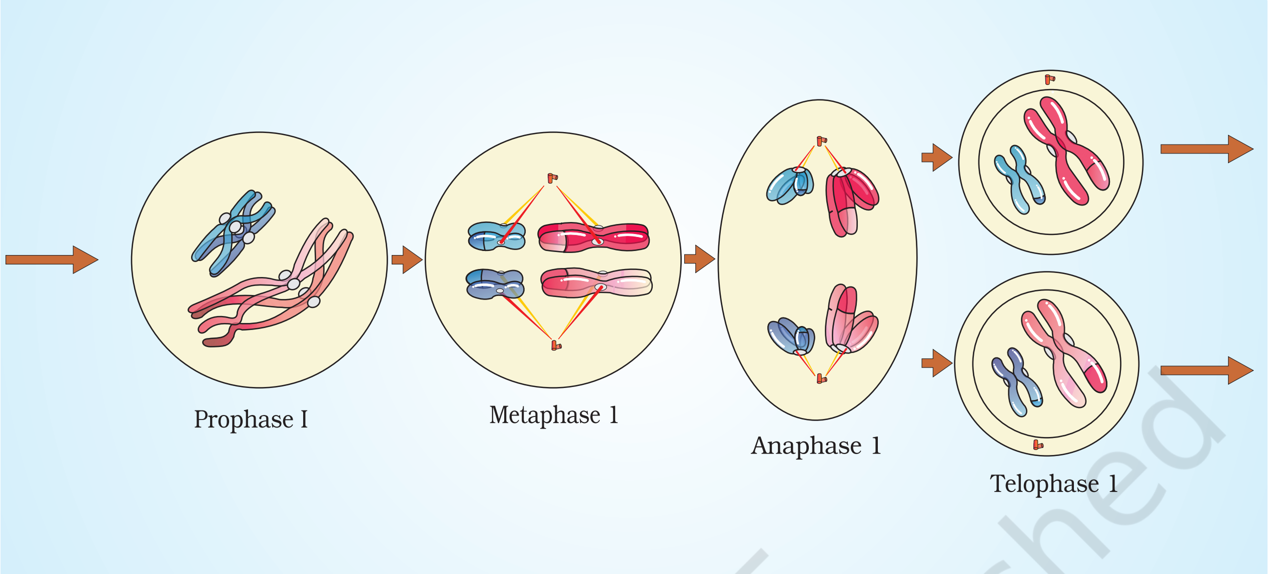


Figure 10.3 Stages of Meiosis I

Anaphase I: The homologous chromosomes separate, while sister chromatids remain associated at their centromeres (Figure 10.3).

Telophase I: The nuclear membrane and nucleolus reappear, cytokinesis follows and this is called as dyad of cells (Figure 10.3). Although in many cases the chromosomes do undergo some dispersion, they do not reach the extremely extended state of the interphase nucleus. The stage between the two meiotic divisions is called interkinesis and is generally short lived. There is no replication of DNA during interkinesis. Interkinesis is followed by prophase II, a much simpler prophase than prophase I.

10.4.2 Meiosis II

Prophase II: Meiosis II is initiated immediately after cytokinesis, usually before the chromosomes have fully elongated. In contrast to meiosis I, meiosis II resembles a normal mitosis. The nuclear membrane disappears by the end of prophase II (Figure 10.4). The chromosomes again become compact.

Metaphase II: At this stage, the chromosomes align at the equator and the microtubules from opposite poles of the spindle get attached to the kinetochores (Figure 10.4) of sister chromatids.

Anaphase II: It begins with the simultaneous splitting of the centromere of each chromosome (which was holding the sister chromatids together), allowing them to move toward opposite poles of the cell (Figure 10.4) by shortening of microtubules attached to kinetochores.

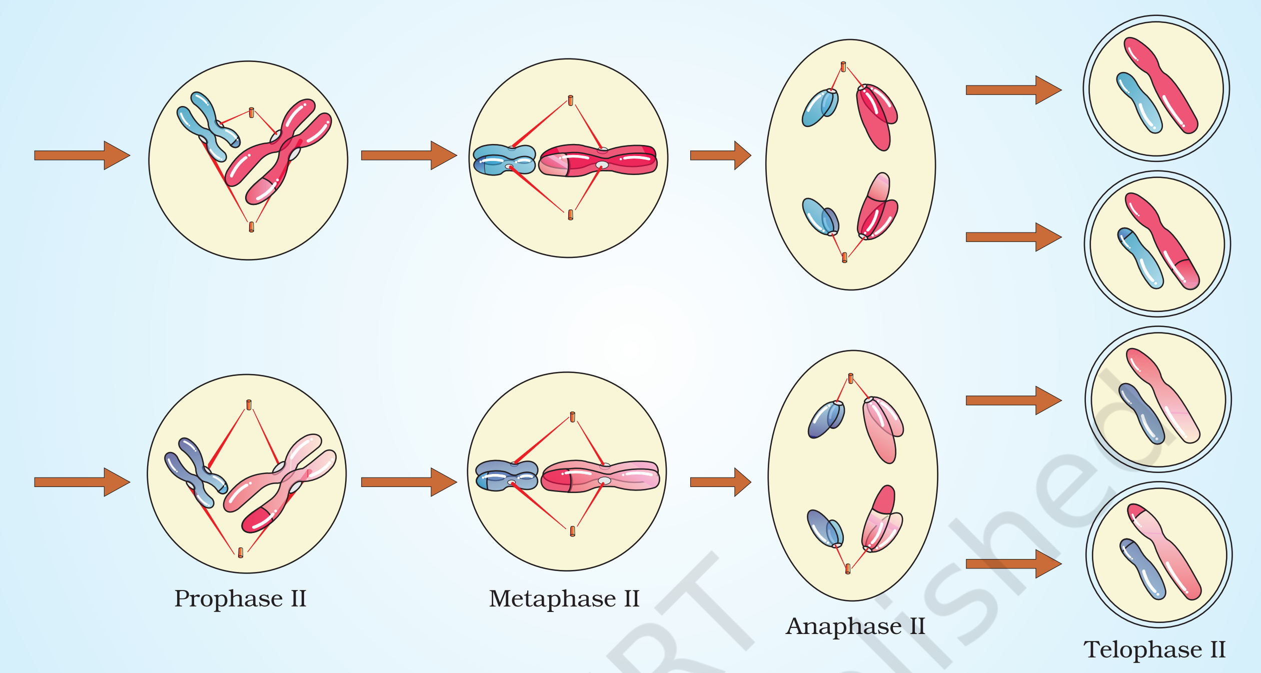


Figure 10.4 Stages of Meiosis II

Telophase II: Meiosis ends with telophase II, in which the two groups of chromosomes once again get enclosed by a nuclear envelope; cytokinesis follows resulting in the formation of tetrad of cells i.e., four haploid daughter cells (Figure 10.4).

10.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF MEIOSIS

Meiosis is the mechanism by which conservation of specific chromosome number of each species is achieved across generations in sexually reproducing organisms, even though the process, per se, paradoxically, results in reduction of chromosome number by half. It also increases the genetic variability in the population of organisms from one generation to the next. Variations are very important for the process of evolution.

SUMMARY

According to the cell theory, cells arise from preexisting cells. The process by which this occurs is called cell division. Any sexually reproducing organism starts its life cycle from a single-celled zygote. Cell division does not stop with the formation of the mature organism but continues throughout its life cycle.

The stages through which a cell passes from one division to the next is called the cell cycle. Cell cycle is divided into two phases called (i) Interphase – a period of preparation for cell division, and (ii) Mitosis (M phase) – the actual period of cell division. Interphase is further subdivided into G_1, S and G_2. G_1 phase is the period when the cell grows and carries out normal metabolism. Most of the organelle duplication also occurs during this phase. S phase marks the phase of DNA replication and chromosome duplication. G_2 phase is the period of cytoplasmic growth. Mitosis is also divided into four stages namely prophase, metaphase, anaphase and telophase. Chromosome condensation occurs during prophase. Simultaneously, the centrioles move to the opposite poles. The nuclear envelope and the nucleolus disappear and the spindle fibres start appearing. Metaphase is marked by the alignment of chromosomes at the equatorial plate. During anaphase the centromeres divide and the chromatids start moving towards the two opposite poles. Once the chromatids reach the two poles, the chromosomal elongation starts, nucleolus and the nuclear membrane reappear. This stage is called the telophase. Nuclear division is then followed by the cytoplasmic division and is called cytokinesis. Mitosis thus, is the equational division in which the chromosome number of the parent is conserved in the daughter cell.

In contrast to mitosis, meiosis occurs in the diploid cells, which are destined to form gametes. It is called the reduction division since it reduces the chromosome number by half while making the gametes. In sexual reproduction when the two gametes fuse the chromosome number is restored to the value in the parent. Meiosis is divided into two phases – meiosis I and meiosis II. In the first meiotic division the homologous chromosomes pair to form bivalents, and undergo crossing over. Meiosis I has a long prophase, which is divided further into five phases. These are leptotene, zygotene, pachytene, diplotene and diakinesis. During metaphase I the bivalents arrange on the equatorial plate. This is followed by anaphase I in which homologous chromosomes move to the opposite poles with both their chromatids. Each pole receives half the chromosome number of the parent cell. In telophase I, the nuclear membrane and nucleolus reappear. Meiosis II is similar to mitosis. During anaphase II the sister chromatids separate. Thus at the end of meiosis four haploid cells are formed.

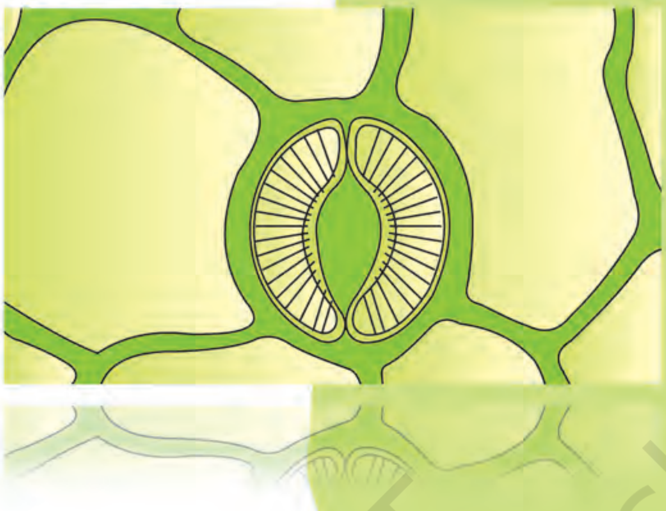
EXERCISES

1. What is the average cell cycle span for a mammalian cell?
2. Distinguish cytokinesis from karyokinesis.
3. Describe the events taking place during interphase.
4. What is G_o (quiescent phase) of cell cycle?

5. Why is mitosis called equational division?
6. Name the stage of cell cycle at which one of the following events occur:
    - (i) Chromosomes are moved to spindle equator.
    - (ii) Centromere splits and chromatids separate.
    - (iii) Pairing between homologous chromosomes takes place.
    - (iv) Crossing over between homologous chromosomes takes place.
7. Describe the following:

    (a) synapsis (b) bivalent (c) chiasmata

    Draw a diagram to illustrate your answer.
8. How does cytokinesis in plant cells differ from that in animal cells?
9. Find examples where the four daughter cells from meiosis are equal in size and where they are found unequal in size.
10. Distinguish anaphase of mitosis from anaphase I of meiosis.
11. List the main differences between mitosis and meiosis.
12. What is the significance of meiosis?
13. Discuss with your teacher about
    - (i) haploid insects and lower plants where cell-division occurs, and
    - (ii) some haploid cells in higher plants where cell-division does not occur.
14. Can there be mitosis without DNA replication in 'S' phase?
15. Can there be DNA replication without cell division?
16. Analyse the events during every stage of cell cycle and notice how the following two parameters change
    - (i) number of chromosomes (N) per cell
    - (ii) amount of DNA content (C) per cell



UNIT 4

PLANT PHYSIOLOGY

Chapter 11
Photosynthesis in Higher Plants

Chapter 12
Respiration in Plants

Chapter 13
Plant Growth and Development

The description of structure and variation of living organisms over a period of time, ended up as two, apparently irreconcilable perspectives on biology. The two perspectives essentially rested on two levels of organisation of life forms and phenomena. One described at organismic and above level of organisation while the second described at cellular and molecular level of organisation. The first resulted in ecology and related disciplines. The second resulted in physiology and biochemistry. Description of physiological processes, in flowering plants as an example, is what is given in the chapters in this unit. The processes of photosynthesis, respiration and ultimately plant growth and development are described in molecular terms but in the context of cellular activities and even at organism level. Wherever appropriate, the relation of the physiological processes to environment is also discussed.

Melvin Calvin

MELVIN CALVIN born in Minnesota in April, 1911, received his Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Minnesota. He served as Professor of Chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley.

Just after world war II, when the world was under shock after the Hiroshima-Nagasaki bombings, and seeing the ill-effects of radio-activity, Calvin and co-workers put radio-activity to beneficial use. He along with J.A. Bassham studied reactions in green plants forming sugar and other substances from raw materials like carbon dioxide, water and minerals by labelling the carbon dioxide with C^{14}. Calvin proposed that plants change light energy to chemical energy by transferring an electron in an organised array of pigment molecules and other substances. The mapping of the pathway of carbon assimilation in photosynthesis earned him Nobel Prize in 1961.

The principles of photosynthesis as established by Calvin are, at present, being used in studies on renewable resource for energy and materials and basic studies in solar energy research.

CHAPTER 11

PHOTOSYNTHESIS IN HIGHER PLANTS

11.1 What do we Know?
11.2 Early Experiments
11.3 Where does Photosynthesis take place?
11.4 How many Pigments are involved in Photosynthesis?
11.5 What is Light Reaction?
11.6 The Electron Transport
11.7 Where are the ATP and NADPH Used?
11.8 The C_4 Pathway
11.9 Photorespiration
11.10 Factors affecting Photosynthesis

All animals including human beings depend on plants for their food. Have you ever wondered from where plants get their food? Green plants, in fact, have to make or rather synthesise the food they need and all other organisms depend on them for their needs. The green plants make or rather synthesise the food they need through photosynthesis and are therefore called autotrophs. You have already learnt that the autotrophic nutrition is found only in plants and all other organisms that depend on the green plants for food are heterotrophs. Green plants carry out 'photosynthesis', a physico-chemical process by which they use light energy to drive the synthesis of organic compounds. Ultimately, all living forms on earth depend on sunlight for energy. The use of energy from sunlight by plants doing photosynthesis is the basis of life on earth. Photosynthesis is important due to two reasons: it is the primary source of all food on earth. It is also responsible for the release of oxygen into the atmosphere by green plants. *Have you ever thought what would happen if there were no oxygen to breath?* This chapter focusses on the structure of the photosynthetic machinery and the various reactions that transform light energy into chemical energy.

11.1 WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Let us try to find out what we already know about photosynthesis. Some simple experiments you may have done in the earlier classes have shown that chlorophyll (green pigment of the leaf), light and CO_2 are required for photosynthesis to occur.

You may have carried out the experiment to look for starch formation in two leaves – a variegated leaf or a leaf that was partially covered with black paper, and exposed to light. On testing these leaves for the presence of starch it was clear that photosynthesis occurred only in the green parts of the leaves in the presence of light.

Another experiment you may have carried out where a part of a leaf is enclosed in a test tube containing some KOH soaked cotton (which absorbs CO_2), while the other half is exposed to air. The setup is then placed in light for some time. On testing for the presence of starch later in the two parts of the leaf, you must have found that the exposed part of the leaf tested positive for starch while the portion that was in the tube, tested negative. This showed that CO_2 was required for photosynthesis. *Can you explain how this conclusion could be drawn?*

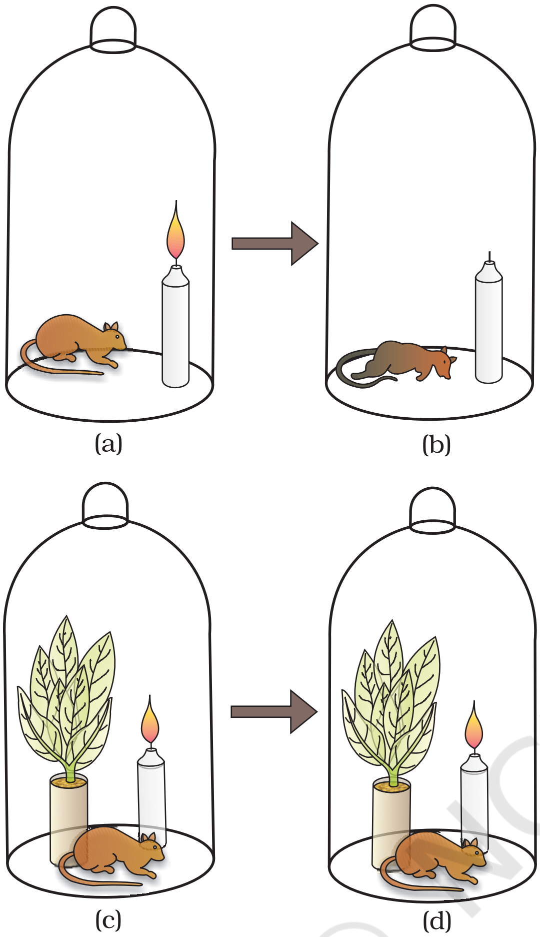


Figure 11.1 Priestley's experiment

11.2 EARLY EXPERIMENTS

It is interesting to learn about those simple experiments that led to a gradual development in our understanding of photosynthesis.

Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) in 1770 performed a series of experiments that revealed the essential role of air in the growth of green plants. Priestley, you may recall, discovered oxygen in 1774. Priestley observed that a candle burning in a closed space – a bell jar, soon gets extinguished (Figure 11.1 a, b, c, d). Similarly, a mouse would soon suffocate in a closed space. He concluded that a burning candle or an animal that breathe the air, both somehow, damage the air. But when he placed a mint plant in the same bell jar, he found that the mouse stayed alive and the candle continued to burn. Priestley hypothesised as follows: Plants restore to the air whatever breathing animals and burning candles remove.

Can you imagine how Priestley would have conducted the experiment using a candle and a plant? Remember, he would need to rekindle the candle to test whether it burns after a few days. *How many different ways can you think of to light the candle without disturbing the set-up?*

Using a similar setup as the one used by Priestley, but by placing it once in the dark and once in the sunlight, Jan Ingenhousz (1730-1799) showed that sunlight is essential for the plant process that somehow purifies the air fouled by burning candles or breathing animals. Ingenhousz in an elegant experiment with an aquatic plant showed that in bright sunlight, small bubbles were formed around the green parts while in the dark they did not. Later he identified these bubbles to be of oxygen. Hence he showed that it is only the green part of the plants that could release oxygen.

It was not until about 1854 that Julius von Sachs provided evidence for production of glucose when plants grow. Glucose is usually stored as starch. His later studies showed that the green substance in plants (chlorophyll as we know it now) is located in special bodies (later called chloroplasts) within plant cells. He found that the green parts in plants is where glucose is made, and that the glucose is usually stored as starch.

Now consider the interesting experiments done by T.W Engelmann (1843 – 1909). Using a prism he split light into its spectral components and then illuminated a green alga, *Cladophora*, placed in a suspension of aerobic bacteria. The bacteria were used to detect the sites of O_2 evolution. He observed that the bacteria accumulated mainly in the region of blue and red light of the split spectrum. A first action spectrum of photosynthesis was thus described. It resembles roughly the absorption spectra of chlorophyll *a* and *b* (discussed in section 11.4).

By the middle of the nineteenth century the key features of plant photosynthesis were known, namely, that plants could use light energy to make carbohydrates from CO_2 and water. The empirical equation representing the total process of photosynthesis for oxygen evolving organisms was then understood as:

$$CO_2 + H_2O \xrightarrow{\text{Light}} [CH_2O] + O_2$$

where $[CH_2O]$ represented a carbohydrate (e.g., glucose, a six-carbon sugar).

A milestone contribution to the understanding of photosynthesis was that made by a microbiologist, Cornelius van Niel (1897-1985), who, based on his studies of purple and green bacteria, demonstrated that photosynthesis is essentially a light-dependent reaction in which hydrogen from a suitable oxidisable compound reduces carbon dioxide to carbohydrates. This can be expressed by:

$$2H_2A + CO_2 \xrightarrow{\text{Light}} 2A + CH_2O + H_2O$$

In green plants H_2O is the hydrogen donor and is oxidised to O_2. Some organisms do not release O_2 during photosynthesis. When H_2S, instead is the hydrogen donor for purple and green sulphur bacteria, the 'oxidation' product is sulphur or sulphate depending on the organism and not O_2. Hence, he inferred that the O_2 evolved by the green plant comes from H_2O, not from carbon dioxide. This was later proved by using radioisotopic techniques. The correct equation, that would represent the overall process of photosynthesis is therefore:

$$6CO_2 + 12H_2O \xrightarrow{\text{Light}} C_6H_{12}O_6 + 6H_2O + 6O_2$$

where $C_6 H_{12} O_6$ represents glucose. The O_2 released is from water; this was proved using radio isotope techniques. Note that this is not a single reaction but description of a multistep process called photosynthesis. *Can you explain why twelve molecules of water as substrate are used in the equation given above?*

11.3 WHERE DOES PHOTOSYNTHESIS TAKE PLACE?

You would of course answer: in 'the green leaf' or 'in the chloroplasts', based on what you earlier read in Chapter 8. You are definitely right. Photosynthesis does take place in the green leaves of plants but it does so also in other green parts of the plants. *Can you name some other parts where you think photosynthesis may occur?*

You would recollect from previous unit that the mesophyll cells in the leaves, have a large number of chloroplasts. Usually the chloroplasts align themselves along the walls of the mesophyll cells, such that they get the optimum quantity of the incident light. *When do you think the chloroplasts will be aligned with their flat surfaces parallel to the walls? When would they be perpendicular to the incident light?*

You have studied the structure of chloroplast in Chapter 8. Within the chloroplast there is membranous system consisting of grana, the stroma lamellae, and the matrix stroma (Figure 11.2). There is a clear division of labour within the chloroplast. The membrane system is responsible for trapping the light energy and also for the synthesis of ATP and NADPH. In stroma, enzymatic reactions synthesise sugar, which in turn forms starch. The former set of reactions, since they are directly light driven are called **light reactions** (photochemical reactions). The latter are not directly light driven but are dependent on the products of light reactions (ATP and NADPH). Hence, to distinguish the latter they are called, by convention, as **dark reactions** (carbon reactions). However, this should not be construed to mean that they occur in darkness or that they are not light-dependent.

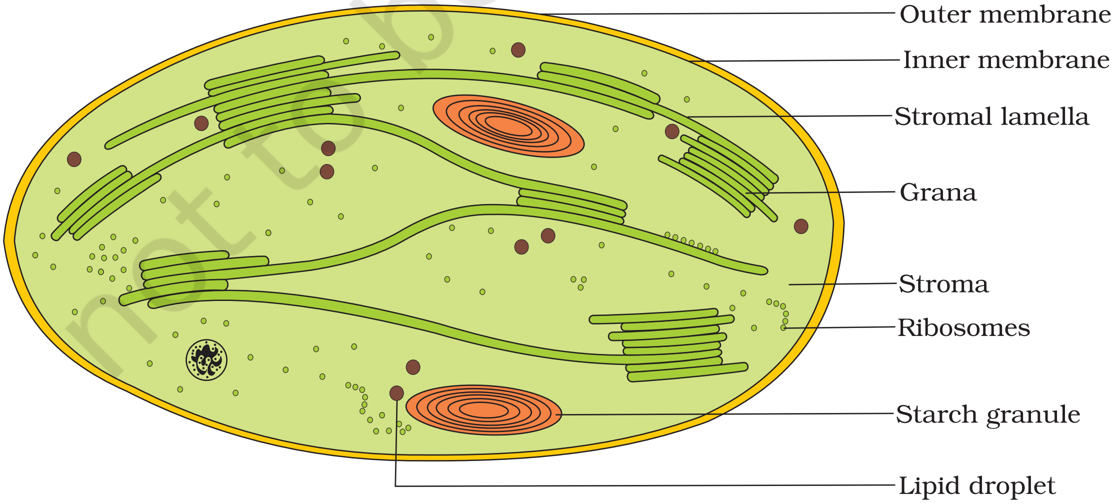


Figure 11.2 Diagrammatic representation of an electron micrograph of a section of chloroplast

11.4 HOW MANY TYPES OF PIGMENTS ARE INVOLVED IN PHOTOSYNTHESIS?

Looking at plants have you ever wondered why and how there are so many shades of green in their leaves – even in the same plant? We can look for an answer to this question by trying to separate the leaf pigments of any green plant through paper chromatography. A chromatographic separation of the leaf pigments shows that the colour that we see in leaves is not due to a single pigment but due to four pigments: **Chlorophyll *a*** (bright or blue green in the chromatogram), **chlorophyll *b*** (yellow green), **xanthophylls** (yellow) and **carotenoids** (yellow to yellow-orange). Let us now see what roles various pigments play in photosynthesis.

Pigments are substances that have an ability to absorb light, at specific wavelengths. *Can you guess which is the most abundant plant pigment in the world?* Let us study the graph showing the ability of chlorophyll *a* pigment to absorb lights of different wavelengths (Figure 11.3 a). Of course, you are familiar with the wavelength of the visible spectrum of light as well as the VIBGYOR.

From Figure 11.3a can you determine the wavelength (colour of light) at which chlorophyll a shows the maximum absorption? Does it show another absorption peak at any other wavelengths too? If yes, which one?

Now look at Figure 11.3b showing the wavelengths at which maximum photosynthesis occurs in a plant. Can you see that the wavelengths at which there is maximum absorption by chlorophyll *a*, i.e., in the blue and the red regions, also shows higher rate of photosynthesis. Hence, we can conclude that chlorophyll *a* is the chief pigment associated with photosynthesis. *But by looking at Figure 11.3c can you say that there is a complete one-to-one overlap between the absorption spectrum of chlorophyll a and the action spectrum of photosynthesis?*

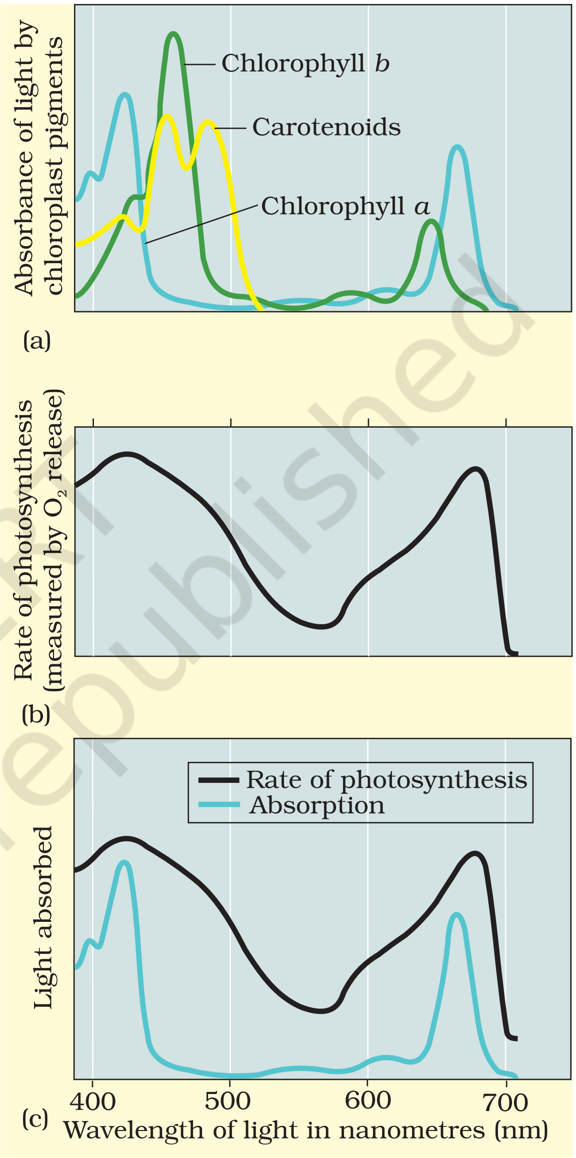


Figure 11.3a Graph showing the absorption spectrum of chlorophyll *a*, *b* and the carotenoids

Figure 11.3b Graph showing action spectrum of photosynthesis

Figure 11.3c Graph showing action spectrum of photosynthesis superimposed on absorption spectrum of chlorophyll *a*

These graphs, together, show that most of the photosynthesis takes place in the blue and red regions of the spectrum; some photosynthesis does take place at the other wavelengths of the visible spectrum. Let us see how this happens. Though chlorophyll is the major pigment responsible for trapping light, other thylakoid pigments like chlorophyll *b*, xanthophylls and carotenoids, which are called accessory pigments, also absorb light and transfer the energy to chlorophyll *a*. Indeed, they not only enable a wider range of wavelength of incoming light to be utilised for photosyntesis but also protect chlorophyll *a* from photo-oxidation.

11.5 WHAT IS LIGHT REACTION?

Light reactions or the 'Photochemical' phase include light absorption, water splitting, oxygen release, and the formation of high-energy chemical intermediates, ATP and NADPH. Several protein complexes are involved in the process. The pigments are organised into two discrete photochemical **light harvesting complexes** (**LHC**) within the **Photosystem I** (**PS I**) and **Photosystem II** (**PS II**). These are named in the sequence of their discovery, and not in the sequence in which they function during the light reaction. The LHC are made up of hundreds of pigment molecules bound to proteins. Each photosystem has all the pigments (except one molecule of chlorophyll *a*) forming a light harvesting system also called **antennae** (Figure 11.4). These pigments help to make photosynthesis more efficient by absorbing different wavelengths of light. The single chlorophyll *a* molecule forms the **reaction centre.** The reaction centre is different in both the photosystems. In PS I the reaction centre chlorophyll *a* has an absorption peak at 700 nm, hence is called **P700,** while in PS II it has absorption maxima at 680 nm, and is called **P680**.

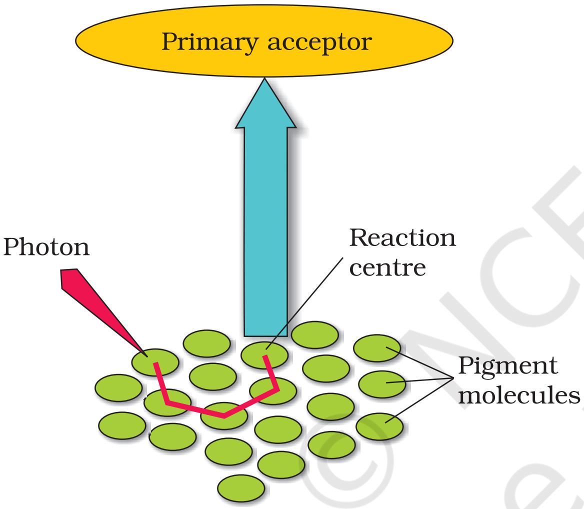


Figure 11.4 The light harvesting complex

11.6 THE ELECTRON TRANSPORT

In photosystem II the reaction centre chlorophyll *a* absorbs 680 nm wavelength of red light causing electrons to become excited and jump into an orbit farther from the atomic nucleus. These electrons are picked up by an electron acceptor which passes them to an **electrons transport**

system consisting of cytochromes (Figure 11.5). This movement of electrons is downhill, in terms of an oxidation-reduction or redox potential scale. The electrons are not used up as they pass through the electron transport chain, but are passed on to the pigments of photosystem PS I. Simultaneously, electrons in the reaction centre of PS I are also excited when they receive red light of wavelength 700 nm and are transferred to another accepter molecule that has a greater redox potential. These electrons then are moved downhill again, this time to a molecule of energy-rich NADP$^+$. The addition of these electrons reduces NADP$^+$ to NADPH + H$^+$. This whole scheme of transfer of electrons, starting from the PS II, uphill to the acceptor, down the electron transport chain to PS I, excitation of electrons, transfer to another acceptor, and finally down hill to NADP$^+$ reducing it to NADPH + H$^+$ is called the **Z scheme**, due to its characterstic shape (Figure 11.5). This shape is formed when all the carriers are placed in a sequence on a redox potential scale.

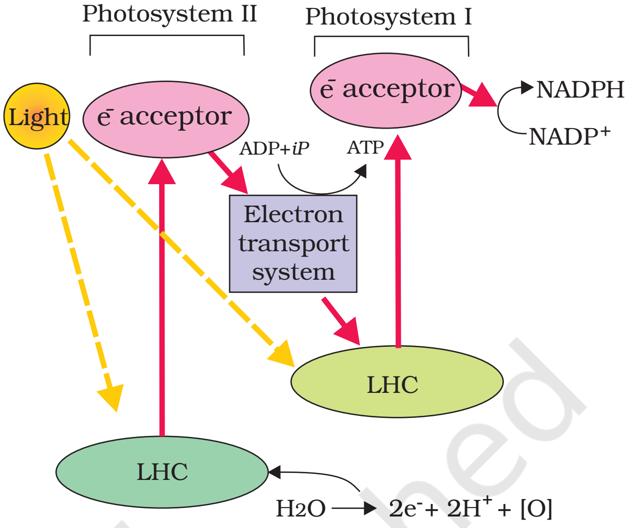


Figure 11.5 Z scheme of light reaction

11.6.1 Splitting of Water

You would then ask, *How does PS II supply electrons continuously?* The electrons that were moved from photosystem II must be replaced. This is achieved by electrons available due to splitting of water. The splitting of water is associated with the PS II; water is split into 2H$^+$, [O] and electrons. This creates oxygen, one of the net products of photosynthesis. The electrons needed to replace those removed from photosystem I are provided by photosystem II.

$$2H_2O \longrightarrow 4H^+ + O_2 + 4e^-$$

We need to emphasise here that the water splitting complex is associated with the PS II, which itself is physically located on the inner side of the membrane of the thylakoid. *Then, where are the protons and O_2 formed likely to be released – in the lumen? or on the outer side of the membrane?*

11.6.2 Cyclic and Non-cyclic Photo-phosphorylation

Living organisms have the capability of extracting energy from oxidisable substances and store this in the form of bond energy. Special substances like ATP, carry this energy in their chemical bonds. The process through which

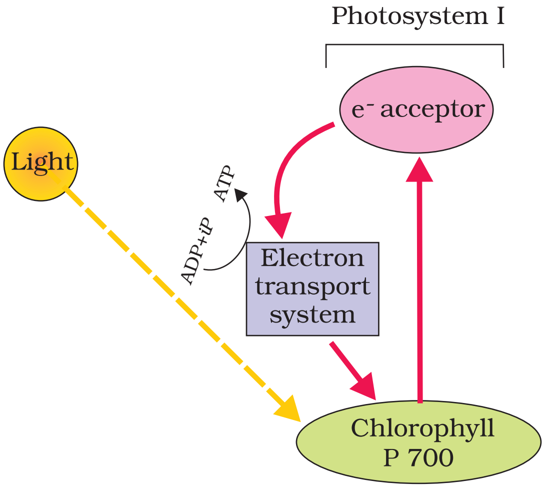


Figure 11.6 Cyclic photophosphorylation

ATP is synthesised by cells (in mitochondria and chloroplasts) is named phosphorylation. Photo-phosphorylation is the synthesis of ATP from ADP and inorganic phosphate in the presence of light. When the two photosystems work in a series, first PS II and then the PS I, a process called non-cyclic photo-phosphorylation occurs. The two photosystems are connected through an electron transport chain, as seen earlier – in the Z scheme. Both ATP and NADPH + H^+ are synthesised by this kind of electron flow (Figure 11.5).

When only PS I is functional, the electron is circulated within the photosystem and the phosphorylation occurs due to cyclic flow of electrons (Figure 11.6). A possible location where this could be happening is in the stroma lamellae. While the membrane or lamellae of the grana have both PS I and PS II the stroma lamellae membranes lack PS II as well as NADP reductase enzyme. The excited electron does not pass on to $NADP^+$ but is cycled back to the PS I complex through the electron transport chain (Figure 11.6). The cyclic flow hence, results only in the synthesis of ATP, but not of NADPH + H^+. Cyclic photophosphorylation also occurs when only light of wavelengths beyond 680 nm are available for excitation.

11.6.3 Chemiosmotic Hypothesis

Let us now try and understand how actually ATP is synthesised in the chloroplast. The chemiosmotic hypothesis has been put forward to explain the mechanism. Like in respiration, in photosynthesis too, ATP synthesis is linked to development of a proton gradient across a membrane. This time these are the membranes of thylakoid. There is one difference though, here the proton accumulation is towards the inside of the membrane, i.e., in the lumen. In respiration, protons accumulate in the intermembrane space of the mitochondria when electrons move through the ETS (Chapter 12).

Let us understand what causes the proton gradient across the membrane. We need to consider again the processes that take place during the activation of electrons and their transport to determine the steps that cause a proton gradient to develop (Figure 11.7).

(a) Since splitting of the water molecule takes place on the inner side of the membrane, the protons or hydrogen ions that are produced by the splitting of water accumulate within the lumen of the thylakoids.

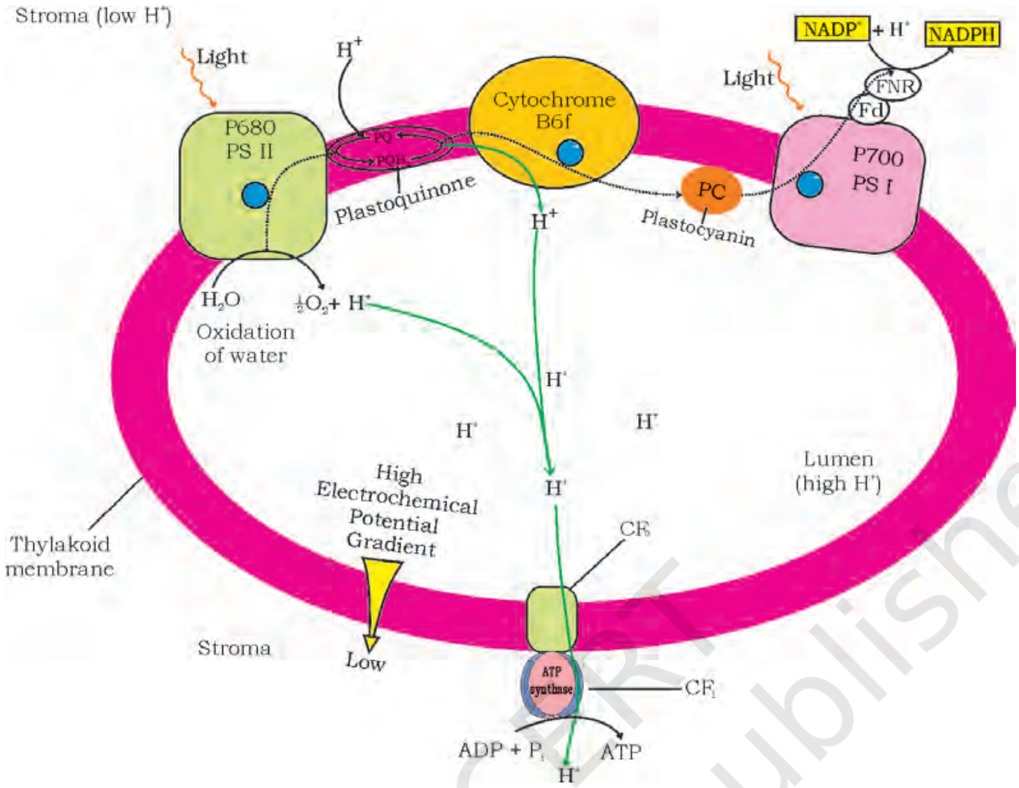

Stroma (low H⁺)
Light
H⁺
P680
PS II
PQ
PQH₂
Plastoquinone
Cytochrome
B6f
H⁺
NADP⁺ + H⁺
NADPH
Light
FNR
Fd
P700
PS I
PC
Plastocyanin
H₂O
½O₂+ H⁺
Oxidation
of water
H⁺
H⁺
H⁺
H⁺
High
Electrochemical
Potential
Gradient
Low
Lumen
(high H⁺)
CF₀
Thylakoid
membrane
Stroma
ATP
synthase
CF₁
ADP + Pᵢ
ATP
H⁺

Figure 11.7 ATP synthesis through chemiosmosis

(b) As electrons move through the photosystems, protons are transported across the membrane. This happens because the primary accepter of electron which is located towards the outer side of the membrane transfers its electron not to an electron carrier but to an H carrier. Hence, this molecule removes a proton from the stroma while transporting an electron. When this molecule passes on its electron to the electron carrier on the inner side of the membrane, the proton is released into the inner side or the lumen side of the membrane.

(c) The NADP reductase enzyme is located on the stroma side of the membrane. Along with electrons that come from the acceptor of electrons of PS I, protons are necessary for the reduction of $NADP^+$ to $NADPH + H^+$. These protons are also removed from the stroma.

Hence, within the chloroplast, protons in the stroma decrease in number, while in the lumen there is accumulation of protons. This creates a proton gradient across the thylakoid membrane as well as a measurable decrease in pH in the lumen.

Why are we so interested in the proton gradient? This gradient is important because it is the breakdown of this gradient that leads to the synthesis of ATP. The gradient is broken down due to the movement of protons across the membrane to the stroma through the transmembrane channel of the CF_0 of the ATP synthase. The ATP synthase enzyme consists of two parts: one called the CF_0 is embedded in the thylakoid membrane and forms a transmembrane channel that carries out facilitated diffusion of protons across the membrane. The other portion is called CF_1 and protrudes on the outer surface of the thylakoid membrane on the side that faces the stroma. The break down of the gradient provides enough energy to cause a conformational change in the CF_1 particle of the ATP synthase, which makes the enzyme synthesise several molecules of energy-packed ATP.

Chemiosmosis requires a membrane, a proton pump, a proton gradient and ATP synthase. Energy is used to pump protons across a membrane, to create a gradient or a high concentration of protons within the thylakoid lumen. ATP synthase has a channel that allows diffusion of protons back across the membrane; this releases enough energy to activate ATP synthase enzyme that catalyses the formation of ATP.

Along with the NADPH produced by the movement of electrons, the ATP will be used immediately in the biosynthetic reaction taking place in the stroma, responsible for fixing CO_2, and synthesis of sugars.

11.7 WHERE ARE THE ATP AND NADPH USED?

We learnt that the products of light reaction are ATP, NADPH and O_2. Of these O_2 diffuses out of the chloroplast while ATP and NADPH are used to drive the processes leading to the synthesis of food, more accurately, sugars. This is the **biosynthetic phase** of photosynthesis. This process does not directly depend on the presence of light but is dependent on the products of the light reaction, i.e., ATP and NADPH, besides CO_2 and H_2O. You may wonder how this could be verified; it is simple: immediately after light becomes unavailable, the biosynthetic process continues for some time, and then stops. If then, light is made available, the synthesis starts again.

Can we, hence, say that calling the biosynthetic phase as the ***dark reaction*** *is a misnomer? Discuss this amongst yourselves.*

Let us now see how the ATP and NADPH are used in the biosynthetic phase. We saw earlier that CO_2 is combined with H_2O to produce $(CH_2O)_n$ or sugars. It was of interest to scientists to find out how this reaction proceeded, or rather what was the first product formed when CO_2 is taken into a reaction or fixed. Just after world war II, among the several efforts to put radioisotopes to beneficial use, the work of Melvin Calvin is exemplary. The use of radioactive ^{14}C by him in algal photosynthesis studies led to the discovery that the first CO_2 fixation product was a 3-carbon organic acid. He also contributed to working out the complete biosynthetic pathway; hence it was called **Calvin cycle** after him. The first product identified was **3-phosphoglyceric** acid or in short **PGA**. *How many carbon atoms does it have?*

Scientists also tried to know whether all plants have PGA as the first product of CO_2 fixation, or whether any other product was formed in other plants. Experiments conducted over a wide range of plants led to the discovery of another group of plants, where the first stable product of CO_2 fixation was again an organic acid, but one which had 4 carbon atoms in it. This acid was identified to be **oxaloacetic acid** or OAA. Since then CO_2 assimilation during photosynthesis was said to be of two main types: those plants in which the first product of CO_2 fixation is a C_3 acid (PGA), i.e., the **C_3 pathway,** and those in which the first product was a C_4 acid (OAA), i.e., the **C_4 pathway**. These two groups of plants showed other associated characteristics that we will discuss later.

11.7.1 The Primary Acceptor of CO_2

Let us now ask ourselves a question that was asked by the scientists who were struggling to understand the 'dark reaction'. *How many carbon atoms would a molecule have which after accepting (fixing) CO_2, would have 3 carbons (of PGA)?*

The studies very unexpectedly showed that the acceptor molecule was a 5-carbon ketose sugar – ribulose bisphosphate (RuBP). *Did any of you think of this possibility?* Do not worry; the scientists also took a long time and conducted many experiments to reach this conclusion. They also believed that since the first product was a C_3 acid, the primary acceptor would be a 2-carbon compound; they spent many years trying to identify a 2-carbon compound before they discovered the 5-carbon RuBP.

11.7.2 The Calvin Cycle

Calvin and his co-workers then worked out the whole pathway and showed that the pathway operated in a cyclic manner; the RuBP was regenerated. Let us now see how the Calvin pathway operates and where the sugar is synthesised. Let us at the outset understand very clearly that the Calvin pathway occurs in **all photosynthetic plants**; it does not matter whether they have C_3 or C_4 (or any other) pathways (Figure 11.8).

For ease of understanding, the Calvin cycle can be described under three stages: carboxylation, reduction and regeneration.

1. **Carboxylation** – Carboxylation is the fixation of CO_2 into a stable organic intermediate. Carboxylation is the most crucial step of the Calvin cycle where CO_2 is utilised for the carboxylation of RuBP. This reaction is catalysed by the enzyme RuBP carboxylase which results in the formation of two molecules of 3-PGA. Since this enzyme also has an oxygenation activity it would be more correct to call it RuBP carboxylase-oxygenase or **RuBisCO**.

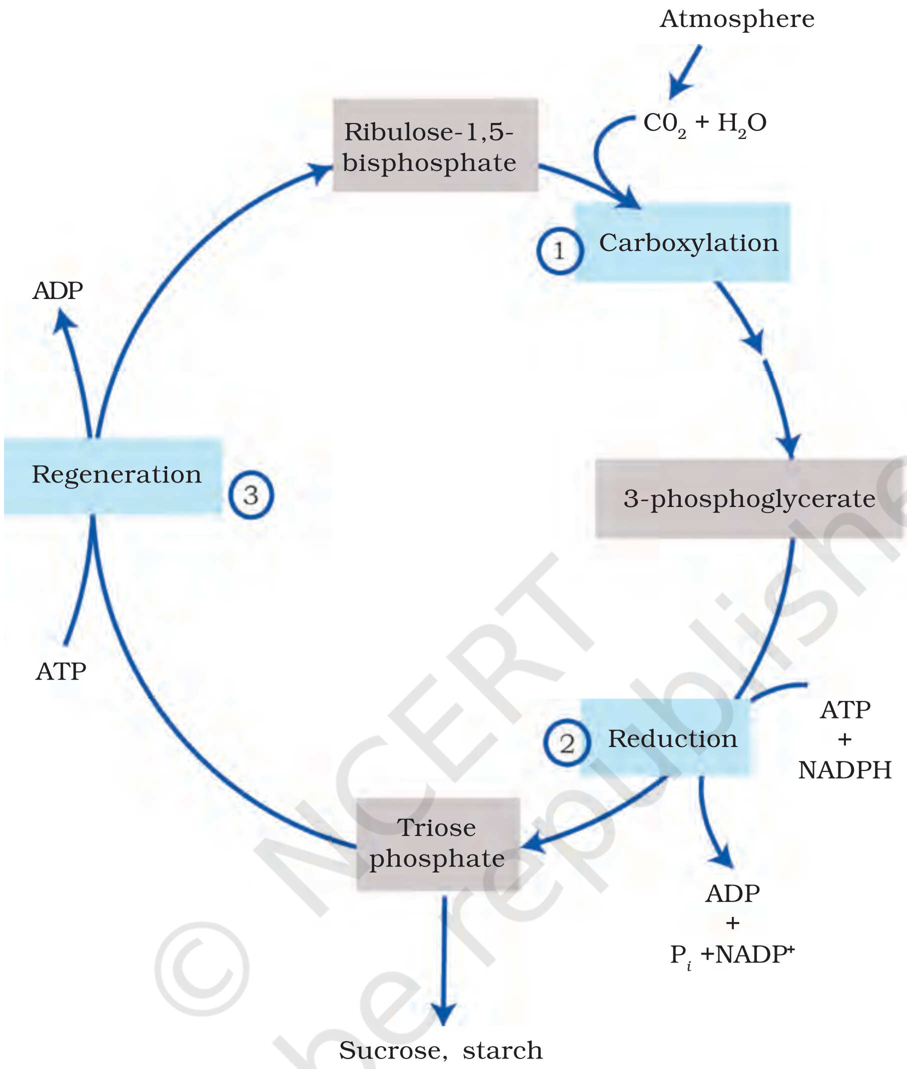

Atmosphere
CO2 + H2O
Ribulose-1,5-bisphosphate
① Carboxylation
3-phosphoglycerate
② Reduction
ATP + NADPH
ADP + Pi +NADP+
Triose phosphate
Sucrose, starch
Regeneration ③
ADP
ATP

Figure 11.8 The Calvin cycle proceeds in three stages : (1) carboxylation, during which CO_2 combines with ribulose-1,5-bisphosphate; (2) reduction, during which carbohydrate is formed at the expense of the photochemically made ATP and NADPH; and (3) regeneration during which the CO_2 acceptor ribulose-1,5-bisphosphate is formed again so that the cycle continues

2. **Reduction** – These are a series of reactions that lead to the formation of glucose. The steps involve utilisation of 2 molecules of ATP for phosphorylation and two of NADPH for reduction per CO_2 molecule fixed. The fixation of six molecules of CO_2 and 6 turns of the cycle are required for the formation of one molecule of glucose from the pathway.
3. **Regeneration** – Regeneration of the CO_2 acceptor molecule RuBP is crucial if the cycle is to continue uninterrupted. The regeneration steps require one ATP for phosphorylation to form RuBP.

Hence for every CO_2 molecule entering the Calvin cycle, 3 molecules of ATP and 2 of NADPH are required. It is probably to meet this difference in number of ATP and NADPH used in the dark reaction that the cyclic phosphorylation takes place.

To make one molecule of glucose 6 turns of the cycle are required. *Work out how many ATP and NADPH molecules will be required to make one molecule of glucose through the Calvin pathway.*

It might help you to understand all of this if we look at what goes in and what comes out of the Calvin cycle.

In	Out
Six CO_2 18 ATP 12 NADPH	One glucose 18 ADP 12 NADP

11.8 THE C_4 PATHWAY

Plants that are adapted to dry tropical regions have the C_4 pathway mentioned earlier. Though these plants have the C_4 oxaloacetic acid as the first CO_2 fixation product they use the C_3 pathway or the Calvin cycle as the main biosynthetic pathway. Then, in what way are they different from C_3 plants? This is a question that you may reasonably ask.

C_4 plants are special: They have a special type of leaf anatomy, they tolerate higher temperatures, they show a response to high light intensities, they lack a process called photorespiration and have greater productivity of biomass. Let us understand these one by one.

Study vertical sections of leaves, one of a C_3 plant and the other of a C_4 plant. *Do you notice the differences? Do both have the same types of mesophylls? Do they have similar cells around the vascular bundle sheath?*

The particularly large cells around the vascular bundles of the C_4 plants are called **bundle sheath cells**, and the leaves which have such anatomy are said to have **'Kranz' anatomy**. 'Kranz' means 'wreath' and is a reflection of the arrangement of cells. The bundle sheath cells may form **several layers** around the vascular bundles; they are characterised by having a large number of chloroplasts, thick walls impervious to gaseous exchange and no intercellular spaces. You may like to cut a section of the leaves of C_4 plants – maize or sorghum – to observe the Kranz anatomy and the distribution of mesophyll cells.

It would be interesting for you to collect leaves of diverse species of plants around you and cut vertical sections of the leaves. Observe under the microscope – look for the bundle sheath around the vascular bundles. The presence of the bundle sheath would help you identify the C_4 plants.

Now study the pathway shown in Figure 11.9. This pathway that has been named the Hatch and Slack Pathway, is again a cyclic process. Let us study the pathway by listing the steps.

The primary CO_2 acceptor is a 3-carbon molecule **phosphoenol pyruvate (PEP)** and is present in the mesophyll cells. The enzyme responsible for this fixation is **PEP carboxylase** or PEPcase. It is important to register that the mesophyll cells lack RuBisCO enzyme. The C_4 acid OAA is formed in the mesophyll cells.

It then forms other 4-carbon compounds like malic acid or aspartic acid in the mesophyll cells itself, which are transported to the bundle sheath cells. In the bundle sheath cells these C_4 acids are broken down to release CO_2 and a 3-carbon molecule.

The 3-carbon molecule is transported back to the mesophyll where it is converted to PEP again, thus, completing the cycle.

The CO_2 released in the bundle sheath cells enters the C_3 or the Calvin pathway, a pathway common to all plants. The bundle sheath cells are

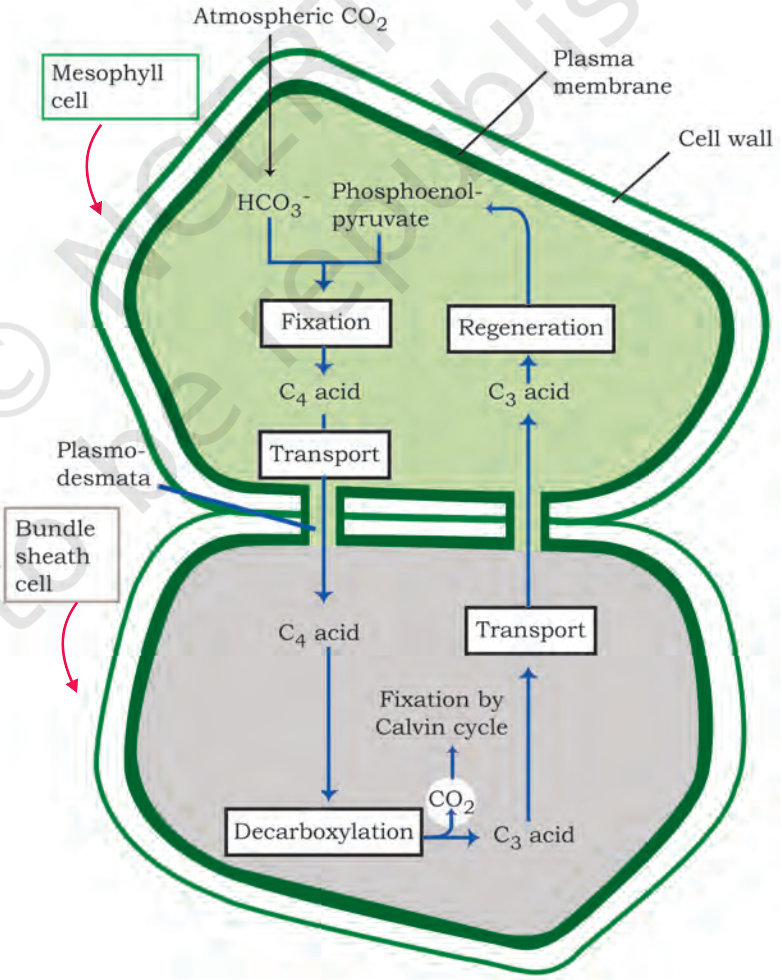

Atmospheric CO_2
Mesophyll cell
Plasma membrane
Cell wall
HCO_3^-
Phosphoenol-pyruvate
Fixation
Regeneration
C_4 acid
C_3 acid
Transport
Plasmo-desmata
Bundle sheath cell
C_4 acid
Transport
Fixation by Calvin cycle
CO_2
Decarboxylation
C_3 acid

Figure 11.9 Diagrammatic representation of the Hatch and Slack Pathway

rich in an enzyme Ribulose bisphosphate carboxylase-oxygenase **(RuBisCO)**, but lack PEPcase. Thus, the basic pathway that results in the formation of the sugars, the Calvin pathway, is common to the C_3 and C_4 plants.

Did you note that the Calvin pathway occurs in all the mesophyll cells of the C_3 plants? In the C_4 plants it does not take place in the mesophyll cells but does so only in the bundle sheath cells.

11.9 PHOTORESPIRATION

Let us try and understand one more process that creates an important difference between C_3 and C_4 plants – **Photorespiration**. To understand photorespiration we have to know a little bit more about the first step of the Calvin pathway – the first CO_2 fixation step. This is the reaction where RuBP combines with CO_2 to form 2 molecules of 3PGA, that is catalysed by RuBisCO.

$$\text{RuBP} + CO_2 \xrightarrow{\text{RuBisCo}} 2 \times \text{3PGA}$$

RuBisCO that is the most abundant enzyme in the world (Do you wonder why?) is characterised by the fact that its active site can bind to both CO_2 and O_2 – hence the name. *Can you think how this could be possible?* RuBisCO has a much greater affinity for CO_2 when the $CO_2 : O_2$ is nearly equal. Imagine what would happen if this were not so! This binding is competitive. It is the relative concentration of O_2 and CO_2 that determines which of the two will bind to the enzyme.

In C_3 plants some O_2 does bind to RuBisCO, and hence CO_2 fixation is decreased. Here the RuBP instead of being converted to 2 molecules of PGA binds with O_2 to form one molecule of phosphoglycerate and phosphoglycolate (2 Carbon) in a pathway called photorespiration. In the photorespiratory pathway, there is neither synthesis of sugars, nor of ATP. Rather it results in the release of CO_2 with the utilisation of ATP. In the photorespiratory pathway there is no synthesis of ATP or NADPH. The biological function of photorespiration is not known yet.

In C_4 plants photorespiration does not occur. This is because they have a mechanism that increases the concentration of CO_2 at the enzyme site. This takes place when the C_4 acid from the mesophyll is broken down in the bundle sheath cells to release CO_2 – this results in increasing the intracellular concentration of CO_2. In turn, this ensures that the RuBisCO functions as a carboxylase minimising the oxygenase activity.

Now that you know that the C_4 plants lack photorespiration, you probably can understand why productivity and yields are better in these plants. In addition, these plants show tolerance to higher temperatures.

Based on the above discussion can you compare plants showing the C_3 and the C_4 pathway? Use the table format given in table 11.1 and fill in the information.

TABLE 11.1 Fill in the Columns 2 and 3 in this table to highlight the differences between C_3 and C_4 Plants

Characteristics	C_3 Plants	C_4 Plants	Choose from
Cell type in which the Calvin cycle takes place			Mesophyll/Bundle sheath/both
Cell type in which the initial carboxylation reaction occurs			Mesophyll/Bundle sheath /both
How many cell types does the leaf have that fix CO_2.			Two: Bundle sheath and mesophyll One: Mesophyll Three: Bundle sheath, palisade, spongy mesophyll
Which is the primary CO_2 acceptor			RuBP/PEP/PGA
Number of carbons in the primary CO_2 acceptor			5 / 4 / 3
Which is the primary CO_2 fixation product			PGA/OAA/RuBP/PEP
No. of carbons in the primary CO_2 fixation product			3 / 4 / 5
Does the plant have RuBisCO?			Yes/No/Not always
Does the plant have PEP Case?			Yes/No/Not always
Which cells in the plant have Rubisco?			Mesophyll/Bundle sheath/none
CO_2 fixation rate under high light conditions			Low/ high/ medium
Whether photorespiration is present at low light intensities			High/negligible/sometimes
Whether photorespiration is present at high light intensities			High/negligible/sometimes
Whether photorespiration would be present at low CO_2 concentrations			High/negligible/sometimes
Whether photorespiration would be present at high CO_2 concentrations			High/negligible/sometimes
Temperature optimum			30-40°C/20-25°C/above 40°C
Examples			Cut vertical sections of leaves of different plants and observe under the microscope for Kranz anatomy and list them in the appropriate columns.

11.10 FACTORS AFFECTING PHOTOSYNTHESIS

An understanding of the factors that affect photosynthesis is necessary. The rate of photosynthesis is very important in determining the yield of plants including crop plants. Photosynthesis is under the influence of several factors, both internal (plant) and external. The plant factors include the number, size, age and orientation of leaves, mesophyll cells and chloroplasts, internal CO_2 concentration and the amount of chlorophyll. The plant or internal factors are dependent on the genetic predisposition and the growth of the plant.

The external factors would include the availability of sunlight, temperature, CO_2 concentration and water. As a plant photosynthesises, all these factors will simultaneously affect its rate. Hence, though several factors interact and simultaneously affect photosynthesis or CO_2 fixation, usually one factor is the major cause or is the one that limits the rate. Hence, at any point the rate will be determined by the factor available at sub-optimal levels.

When several factors affect any [bio] chemical process, Blackman's (1905) **Law of Limiting Factors** comes into effect. This states the following:

If a chemical process is affected by more than one factor, then its rate will be determined by the factor which is nearest to its minimal value: it is the factor which directly affects the process if its quantity is changed.

For example, despite the presence of a green leaf and optimal light and CO_2 conditions, the plant may not photosynthesise if the temperature is very low. This leaf, if given the optimal temperature, will start photosynthesising.

11.10.1 Light

We need to distinguish between light quality, light intensity and the duration of exposure to light, while discussing light as a factor that affects photosynthesis. There is a linear relationship between incident light and CO_2 fixation rates at low light intensities. At higher light intensities, gradually the rate does not show further increase as other factors become limiting (Figure 11.10). What is interesting to note is that light saturation occurs at 10 per cent of the full sunlight. Hence, except for plants in shade or in dense forests, light is rarely a limiting factor in nature. Increase in

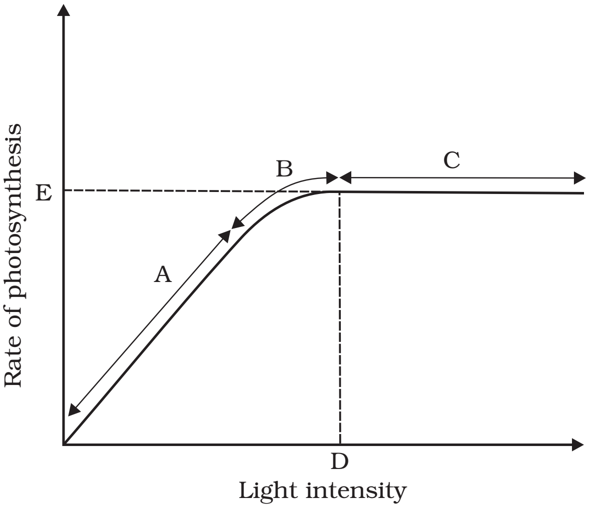


Figure 11.10 Graph of light intensity on the rate of photosynthesis

incident light beyond a point causes the breakdown of chlorophyll and a decrease in photosynthesis.

11.10.2 Carbon dioxide Concentration

Carbon dioxide is the major limiting factor for photosynthesis. The concentration of CO_2 is very low in the atmosphere (between 0.03 and 0.04 per cent). Increase in concentration upto 0.05 per cent can cause an increase in CO_2 fixation rates; beyond this the levels can become damaging over longer periods.

The C_3 and C_4 plants respond differently to CO_2 concentrations. At low light conditions neither group responds to high CO_2 conditions. At high light intensities, both C_3 and C_4 plants show increase in the rates of photosynthesis. What is important to note is that the C_4 plants show saturation at about 360 μlL^{-1} while C_3 responds to increased CO_2 concentration and saturation is seen only beyond 450 μlL^{-1}. Thus, current availability of CO_2 levels is limiting to the C_3 plants.

The fact that C_3 plants respond to higher CO_2 concentration by showing increased rates of photosynthesis leading to higher productivity has been used for some greenhouse crops such as tomatoes and bell pepper. They are allowed to grow in carbon dioxide enriched atmosphere that leads to higher yields.

11.10.3 Temperature

The dark reactions being enzymatic are temperature controlled. Though the light reactions are also temperature sensitive they are affected to a much lesser extent. The C_4 plants respond to higher temperatures and show higher rate of photosynthesis while C_3 plants have a much lower temperature optimum.

The temperature optimum for photosynthesis of different plants also depends on the habitat that they are adapted to. Tropical plants have a higher temperature optimum than the plants adapted to temperate climates.

11.10.4 Water

Even though water is one of the reactants in the light reaction, the effect of water as a factor is more through its effect on the plant, rather than directly on photosynthesis. Water stress causes the stomata to close hence reducing the CO_2 availability. Besides, water stress also makes leaves wilt, thus, reducing the surface area of the leaves and their metabolic activity as well.

SUMMARY

Green plants make their own food by photosynthesis. During this process carbon dioxide from the atmosphere is taken in by leaves through stomata and used for making carbohydrates, principally glucose and starch. Photosynthesis takes place only in the green parts of the plants, mainly the leaves. Within the leaves, the mesophyll cells have a large number of chloroplasts that are responsible for CO_2 fixation. Within the chloroplasts, the membranes are sites for the light reaction, while the chemosynthetic pathway occurs in the stroma. Photosynthesis has two stages: the light reaction and the carbon fixing reactions. In the light reaction the light energy is absorbed by the pigments present in the antenna, and funnelled to special chlorophyll *a* molecules called reaction centre chlorophylls. There are two photosystems, PS I and PS II. PS I has a 700 nm absorbing chlorophyll *a* P700 molecule at its reaction centre, while PS II has a P680 reaction centre that absorbs red light at 680 nm. After absorbing light, electrons are excited and transferred through PS II and PS I and finally to NAD forming NADH. During this process a proton gradient is created across the membrane of the thylakoid. The breakdown of the protons gradient due to movement through the F_0 part of the ATPase enzyme releases enough energy for synthesis of ATP. Splitting of water molecules is associated with PS II resulting in the release of O_2, protons and transfer of electrons to PS II.

In the carbon fixation cycle, CO_2 is added by the enzyme, RuBisCO, to a 5-carbon compound RuBP that is converted to 2 molecules of 3-carbon PGA. This is then converted to sugar by the Calvin cycle, and the RuBP is regenerated. During this process ATP and NADPH synthesised in the light reaction are utilised. RuBisCO also catalyses a wasteful oxygenation reaction in C_3 plants: photorespiration.

Some tropical plants show a special type of photosynthesis called C_4 pathway. In these plants the first product of CO_2 fixation that takes place in the mesophyll, is a 4-carbon compound. In the bundle sheath cells the Calvin pathway is carried out for the synthesis of carbohydrates.

EXERCISES

1. By looking at a plant externally, can you tell whether a plant is C_3 or C_4? Why and how?
2. By looking at which internal structure of a plant you can tell whether a plant is C_3 or C_4? Explain.
3. Even though a very few cells in a C_4 plant carry out the biosynthetic – Calvin pathway, yet they are highly productive. Can you discuss why?

4. RuBisCO is an enzyme that acts both as a carboxylase and oxygenase. Why do you think RuBisCO carries out more carboxylation in C_4 plants?
5. Suppose there were plants that had a high concentration of Chlorophyll *b*, but lacked chlorophyll *a*, would it carry out photosynthesis? Then why do plants have chlorophyll *b* and other accessory pigments?
6. Why is the colour of a leaf kept in the dark frequently becomes yellow, or pale green? Which pigment do you think is more stable?
7. Look at leaves of the same plant on the shady side and compare it with the leaves on the sunny side. Or, compare the potted plants kept in the sunlight with those in the shade. Which of them has leaves that are darker green ? Why?
8. Figure 11.10 shows the effect of light on the rate of photosynthesis. Based on the graph, answer the following questions:
   (a) At which point/s (A, B or C) in the curve light is a limiting factor?
   (b) What could be the limiting factor/s in region A?
   (c) What do C and D represent on the curve?
9. Give comparison between the following:
   (a) C_3 and C_4 pathways
   (b) Cyclic and non-cyclic photophosphorylation
   (c) Anatomy of leaf in C_3 and C_4 plants

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CHAPTER 12

RESPIRATION IN PLANTS

12.1 Do Plants Breathe?

12.2 Glycolysis

12.3 Fermentation

12.4 Aerobic Respiration

12.5 The Respiratory Balance Sheet

12.6 Amphibolic Pathway

12.7 Respiratory Quotient

All of us breathe to live, but why is breathing so essential to life? What happens when we breathe? Also, do all living organisms, including plants and microbes, breathe? If so, how?

All living organisms need energy for carrying out daily life activities, be it absorption, transport, movement, reproduction or even breathing. Where does all this energy come from? We know we eat food for energy – but how is this energy taken from food? How is this energy utilised? Do all foods give the same amount of energy? Do plants 'eat'? Where do plants get their energy from? And micro-organisms – for their energy requirements, do they eat 'food'?

You may wonder at the several questions raised above – they may seem to be very disconnected. But in reality, the process of breathing is very much connected to the process of release of energy from food. Let us try and understand how this happens.

All the energy required for 'life' processes is obtained by oxidation of some macromolecules that we call 'food'. Green plants and cyanobacteria can prepare their own food; by the process of photosynthesis they trap light energy and convert it into chemical energy that is stored in the bonds of carbohydrates like glucose, sucrose and starch. We must remember that in green plants too, not all cells, tissues and organs photosynthesise; only cells containing chloroplasts, that are most often located in the superficial layers, carry out photosynthesis. Hence, even in green plants all other organs, tissues and cells that are non-green, need food for oxidation. Hence, food has to be translocated to all non-green parts. Animals are heterotrophic, i.e., they obtain food from plants directly (herbivores) or indirectly (carnivores). Saprophytes like fungi are dependent on dead and decaying matter. What is important to recognise is that ultimately all the food that is respired for life processes comes from photosynthesis. This chapter deals with **cellular respiration** or the mechanism of breakdown of food materials within the cell to release energy, and the trapping of this energy for synthesis of ATP.

Photosynthesis, of course, takes place within the chloroplasts (in the eukaryotes), whereas the breakdown of complex molecules to yield energy takes place in the cytoplasm and in the mitochondria (also only in eukaryotes). The breaking of the C-C bonds of complex compounds through oxidation within the cells, leading to release of considerable amount of energy is called **respiration**. The compounds that are oxidised during this process are known as **respiratory substrates.** Usually carbohydrates are oxidised to release energy, but proteins, fats and even organic acids can be used as respiratory substances in some plants, under certain conditions. During oxidation within a cell, all the energy contained in respiratory substrates is not released free into the cell, or in a single step. It is released in a series of slow step-wise reactions controlled by enzymes, and it is trapped as chemical energy in the form of ATP. Hence, it is important to understand that the energy released by oxidation in respiration is not (or rather cannot be) used directly but is used to synthesise ATP, which is broken down whenever (and wherever) energy needs to be utilised. Hence, ATP acts as the energy currency of the cell. This energy trapped in ATP is utilised in various energy-requiring processes of the organisms, and the carbon skeleton produced during respiration is used as precursors for biosynthesis of other molecules in the cell.

12.1 DO PLANTS BREATHE?

Well, the answer to this question is not quite so direct. Yes, plants require O_2 for respiration to occur and they also give out CO_2. Hence, plants have systems in place that ensure the availability of O_2. Plants, unlike animals, have no specialised organs for gaseous exchange but they have stomata and lenticels for this purpose. There are several reasons why plants can get along without respiratory organs. First, each plant part takes care of its own gas-exchange needs. There is very little transport of gases from one plant part to another. Second, plants do not present great demands for gas exchange. Roots, stems and leaves respire at rates far lower than animals do. Only during photosynthesis are large volumes of gases exchanged and, each leaf is well adapted to take care of its own needs during these periods. When cells photosynthesise, availability of O_2 is not a problem in these cells since O_2 is released within the cell. Third, the distance that gases must diffuse even in large, bulky plants is not great. Each living cell in a plant is located quite close to the surface of the plant. 'This is true for leaves', you may ask, 'but what about thick, woody stems and roots?' In stems, the 'living' cells are organised in thin layers inside and beneath the bark. They also have openings called lenticels. The cells in the interior are dead and provide only mechanical support. Thus, most cells of a plant have at least a part of their surface in contact with air. This is also facilitated by the loose packing of parenchyma cells in leaves, stems and roots, which provide an interconnected network of air spaces.

The complete combustion of glucose, which produces CO_2 and H_2O as end products, yields energy most of which is given out as heat.

$$C_6H_{12}O_6 + 6O_2 \longrightarrow 6CO_2 + 6H_2O + \text{Energy}$$

If this energy is to be useful to the cell, it should be able to utilise it to synthesise other molecules that the cell requires. The strategy that the plant cell uses is to catabolise the glucose molecule in such a way that not all the liberated energy goes out as heat. The key is to oxidise glucose not in one step but in several small steps enabling some steps to be just large enough such that the energy released can be coupled to ATP synthesis. How this is done is, essentially, the story of respiration.

During the process of respiration, oxygen is utilised, and carbon dioxide, water and energy are released as products. The combustion reaction requires oxygen. But some cells live where oxygen may or may not be available. *Can you think of such situations (and organisms) where* O_2 *is not available?* There are sufficient reasons to believe that the first cells on this planet lived in an atmosphere that lacked oxygen. Even among present-day living organisms, we know of several that are adapted to anaerobic conditions. Some of these organisms are facultative anaerobes, while in others the requirement for anaerobic condition is obligate. In any case, all living organisms retain the enzymatic machinery to partially oxidise glucose without the help of oxygen. This breakdown of glucose to pyruvic acid is called **glycolysis.**

12.2 GLYCOLYSIS

The term glycolysis has originated from the Greek words, *glycos* for sugar, and *lysis* for splitting. The scheme of glycolysis was given by Gustav Embden, Otto Meyerhof, and J. Parnas, and is often referred to as the EMP pathway. In anaerobic organisms, it is the only process in respiration. Glycolysis occurs in the cytoplasm of the cell and is present in all living organisms. In this process, glucose undergoes partial oxidation to form two molecules of pyruvic acid. In plants, this glucose is derived from sucrose, which is the end product of photosynthesis, or from storage carbohydrates. Sucrose is converted into glucose and fructose by the enzyme, invertase, and these two monosaccharides readily enter the glycolytic pathway. Glucose and fructose are phosphorylated to give rise to glucose-6-phosphate by the activity of the enzyme hexokinase. This phosphorylated form of glucose then isomerises to produce fructose-6-phosphate. Subsequent steps of metabolism of glucose and fructose are same. The various steps of glycolysis are depicted in Figure 12.1. In glycolysis, a chain of ten reactions, under the control of different enzymes, takes place to produce pyruvate from glucose. While studying the steps of glycolysis, please note the steps at which utilisation or synthesis of ATP or (in this case) $NADH + H^+$ take place.

ATP is utilised at two steps: first in the conversion of glucose into glucose 6-phosphate and second in the conversion of fructose 6-phosphate to fructose 1, 6-bisphosphate.

The fructose 1, 6-bisphosphate is split into dihydroxyacetone phosphate and 3-phosphoglyceraldehyde (PGAL). We find that there is one step where $NADH + H^+$ is formed from NAD^+; this is when 3-phosphoglyceraldehyde (PGAL) is converted to 1, 3-bisphosphoglycerate (BPGA). Two redox-equivalents are removed (in the form of two hydrogen atoms) from PGAL and transferred to a molecule of NAD^+. PGAL is oxidised and with inorganic phosphate to get converted into BPGA. The conversion of BPGA to 3-phosphoglyceric acid (PGA), is also an energy yielding process; this energy is trapped by the formation of ATP. Another ATP is synthesised during the conversion of PEP to pyruvic acid. ***Can you then calculate how many ATP molecules are directly synthesised in this pathway from one glucose molecule?***

Pyruvic acid is then the key product of glycolysis. What is the metabolic fate of pyruvate? This depends on the cellular need.

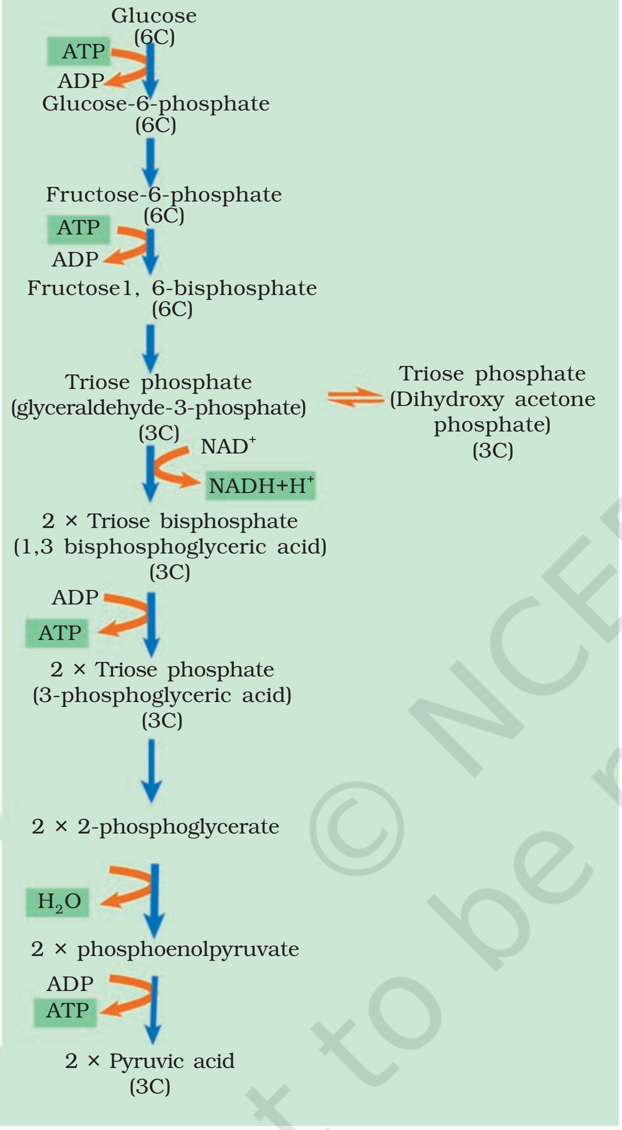
Glucose
(6C)
ATP
ADP
Glucose-6-phosphate
(6C)
Fructose-6-phosphate
(6C)
ATP
ADP
Fructose1, 6-bisphosphate
(6C)
Triose phosphate
(glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate)
(3C)
Triose phosphate
(Dihydroxy acetone
phosphate)
(3C)
NAD^+
$NADH+H^+$
2 × Triose bisphosphate
(1,3 bisphosphoglyceric acid)
(3C)
ADP
ATP
2 × Triose phosphate
(3-phosphoglyceric acid)
(3C)
2 × 2-phosphoglycerate
H_2O
2 × phosphoenolpyruvate
ADP
ATP
2 × Pyruvic acid
(3C)

Figure 12.1 Steps of glycolysis

There are three major ways in which different cells handle pyruvic acid produced by glycolysis. These are lactic acid fermentation, alcoholic fermentation and aerobic respiration. Fermentation takes place under anaerobic conditions in many prokaryotes and unicellular eukaryotes. For the complete oxidation of glucose to CO_2 and H_2O, however, organisms adopt Krebs' cycle which is also called as aerobic respiration. This requires O_2 supply.

12.3 FERMENTATION

In fermentation, say by yeast, the incomplete oxidation of glucose is achieved under anaerobic conditions by sets of reactions where pyruvic acid is converted to CO_2 and ethanol. The enzymes, pyruvic acid decarboxylase and alcohol dehydrogenase catalyse these reactions. Other organisms like some bacteria produce lactic acid from pyruvic acid. The steps involved are shown in Figure 12.2. In animal cells also, like muscles during exercise, when oxygen is inadequate for cellular respiration pyruvic acid is reduced to lactic acid by lactate dehydrogenase. The reducing agent is $NADH+H^+$ which is reoxidised to NAD^+ in both the processes.

In both lactic acid and alcohol fermentation not much energy is released; less than seven per cent of the energy in glucose is released and not all of it is trapped as high energy bonds of ATP. Also, the processes are hazardous – either acid or alcohol is produced. What is the net ATPs that is synthesised (calculate how many ATP are synthesised and deduct the number of ATP utilised during glycolysis) when one molecule of glucose is fermented to alcohol or lactic acid? Yeasts poison themselves to death when the concentration of alcohol reaches about 13 per cent. ***What then would be the maximum concentration of alcohol in beverages that are naturally fermented?*** How do you think alcoholic beverages of alcohol content greater than this concentration are obtained?

What then is the process by which organisms can carry out complete oxidation of glucose and extract the energy stored to

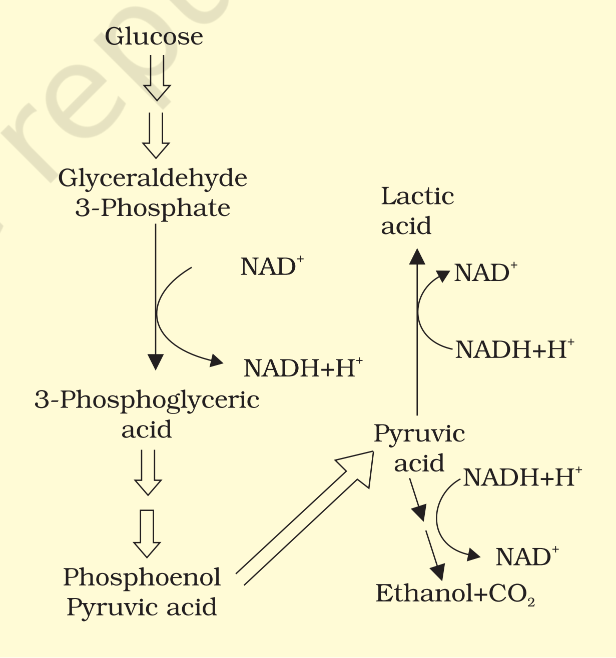

Figure 12.2 Major pathways of anaerobic respiration

synthesise a larger number of ATP molecules needed for cellular metabolism? In eukaryotes these steps take place within the mitochondria and this requires O_2. **Aerobic respiration** is the process that leads to a complete oxidation of organic substances in the presence of oxygen, and releases CO_2, water and a large amount of energy present in the substrate. This type of respiration is most common in higher organisms. We will look at these processes in the next section.

12.4 AEROBIC RESPIRATION

For aerobic respiration to take place within the mitochondria, the final product of glycolysis, pyruvate is transported from the cytoplasm into the mitochondria. The crucial events in aerobic respiration are:

- The complete oxidation of pyruvate by the stepwise removal of all the hydrogen atoms, leaving three molecules of CO_2.
- The passing on of the electrons removed as part of the hydrogen atoms to molecular O_2 with simultaneous synthesis of ATP.

What is interesting to note is that the first process takes place in the matrix of the mitochondria while the second process is located on the inner membrane of the mitochondria.

Pyruvate, which is formed by the glycolytic catabolism of carbohydrates in the cytosol, after it enters mitochondrial matrix undergoes oxidative decarboxylation by a complex set of reactions catalysed by pyruvic dehydrogenase. The reactions catalysed by pyruvic dehydrogenase require the participation of several coenzymes, including NAD^+ and Coenzyme A.

$$\text{Pyruvic acid} + \text{CoA} + \text{NAD}^+ \xrightarrow[\text{Pyruvate dehydrogenase}]{\text{Mg}^{2+}} \text{Acetyl CoA} + \text{CO}_2 + \text{NADH} + \text{H}^+$$

During this process, two molecules of NADH are produced from the metabolism of two molecules of pyruvic acid (produced from one glucose molecule during glycolysis).

The acetyl CoA then enters a cyclic pathway, tricarboxylic acid cycle, more commonly called as Krebs' cycle after the scientist Hans Krebs who first elucidated it.

12.4.1 Tricarboxylic Acid Cycle

The TCA cycle starts with the condensation of acetyl group with oxaloacetic acid (OAA) and water to yield citric acid (Figure 12.3). The reaction is catalysed by the enzyme citrate synthase and a molecule of CoA is released. Citrate is then isomerised to isocitrate. It is followed by two successive steps of decarboxylation, leading to the formation of α-ketoglutaric acid and then succinyl-CoA. In the remaining steps of citric acid cycle, succinyl-CoA is oxidised to OAA allowing the cycle to continue. During the conversion of succinyl-CoA to succinic acid a molecule of GTP is synthesised. This is a substrate level phosphorylation. In a coupled reaction GTP is converted to GDP with the simultaneous synthesis of ATP from ADP. Also there are three points in the cycle where NAD⁺ is reduced to NADH + H⁺ and one point where FAD⁺ is reduced to $FADH_2$. The continued oxidation of acetyl CoA via the TCA cycle requires the continued replenishment of oxaloacetic acid, the first member of the cycle. In addition it also requires regeneration of NAD⁺ and FAD⁺ from NADH and $FADH_2$ respectively. The summary equation for this phase of respiration may be written as follows:

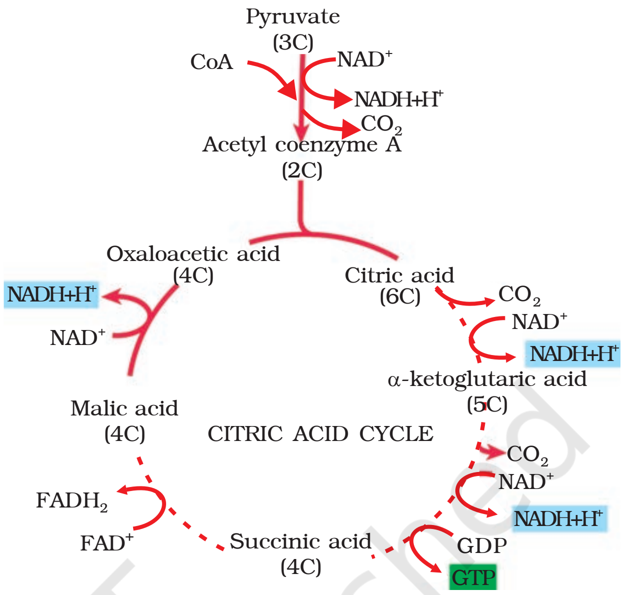

Figure 12.3 The Citric acid cycle

$$\text{Pyruvic acid} + 4NAD^+ + FAD^+ + 2H_2O + ADP + Pi \xrightarrow{\text{Mitochondrial Matrix}} 3CO_2 + 4NADH + 4H^+ + FADH_2 + ATP$$

We have till now seen that glucose has been broken down to release CO_2 and eight molecules of NADH + H⁺ and two of $FADH_2$ have been synthesised besides just two molecules of ATP in TCA cycle. You may be wondering why we have been discussing respiration at all – neither O_2 has come into the picture nor the promised large number of ATP has yet been synthesised. Also what is the role of the NADH + H⁺ and $FADH_2$ that is synthesised? Let us now understand the role of O_2 in respiration and how ATP is synthesised.

12.4.2 Electron Transport System (ETS) and Oxidative Phosphorylation

The following steps in the respiratory process are to release and utilise the energy stored in NADH+H⁺ and $FADH_2$. This is accomplished when they are oxidised through the electron transport system and the electrons are passed on to O_2 resulting in the formation of H_2O. The metabolic pathway through which the electron passes from one carrier to another, is called the ***electron transport system*** (ETS) (Figure 12.4) and it is present in the inner mitochondrial membrane. Electrons from NADH produced in the mitochondrial matrix during citric acid cycle are oxidised by an NADH dehydrogenase (complex I), and electrons are then transferred to ubiquinone located within the inner membrane. Ubiquinone also receives reducing equivalents via $FADH_2$ (complex II) that is generated during oxidation of succinate in the citric acid cycle. The reduced ubiquinone (ubiquinol) is then oxidised with the transfer of electrons to cytochrome *c* via cytochrome bc_1 complex (complex III). Cytochrome *c* is a small protein attached to the outer surface of the inner membrane and acts as a mobile carrier for transfer of electrons between complex III and IV. Complex IV refers to cytochrome *c* oxidase complex containing cytochromes *a* and a_3, and two copper centres.

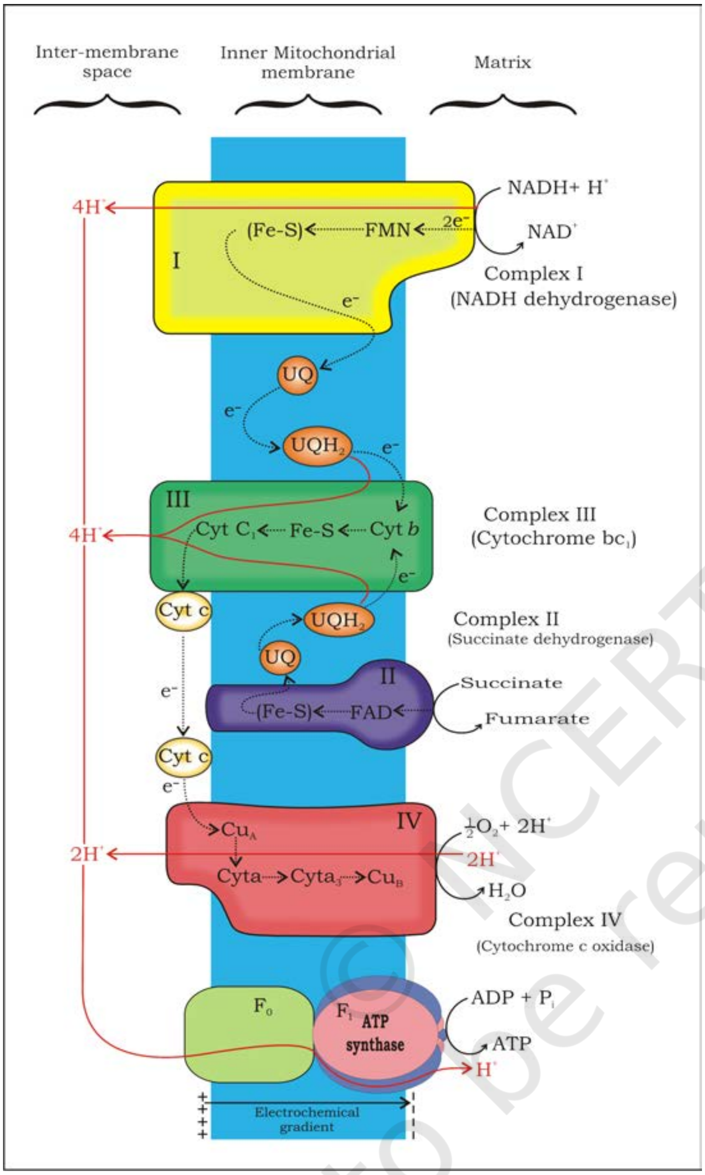
Inter-membrane space
Inner Mitochondrial membrane
Matrix
$4H^+$
$NADH+ H^+$
NAD^+
(Fe-S)
FMN
$2e^-$
I
e^-
Complex I
(NADH dehydrogenase)
UQ
e^-
UQH_2
e^-
III
$4H^+$
Cyt C_1
Fe-S
Cyt *b*
e^-
Complex III
(Cytochrome bc_1)
Cyt c
UQH_2
UQ
Complex II
(Succinate dehydrogenase)
II
Succinate
(Fe-S)
FAD
Fumarate
e^-
Cyt c
e^-
IV
Cu_A
$2H^+$
Cyta
$Cyta_3$
Cu_B
$\frac{1}{2}O_2+ 2H^+$
$2H^+$
H_2O
Complex IV
(Cytochrome c oxidase)
F_0
F_1
ATP synthase
$ADP + P_i$
ATP
H^+
Electrochemical gradient

Figure 12.4 Electron Transport System (ETS)

When the electrons pass from one carrier to another via complex I to IV in the electron transport chain, they are coupled to ATP synthase (complex V) for the production of ATP from ADP and inorganic phosphate. The number of ATP molecules synthesised depends on the nature of the electron donor. Oxidation of one molecule of NADH gives rise to 3 molecules of ATP, while that of one molecule of $FADH_2$ produces 2 molecules of ATP. Although the aerobic process of respiration takes place only in the presence of oxygen, the role of oxygen is limited to the terminal stage of the process. Yet, the presence of oxygen is vital, since it drives the whole process by removing hydrogen from the system. Oxygen acts as the final hydrogen acceptor. Unlike photophosphorylation where it is the light energy that is utilised for the production of proton gradient required for phosphorylation, in respiration it is the energy of oxidation-reduction utilised for the same process. It is for this reason that the process is called oxidative phosphorylation.

You have already studied about the mechanism of membrane-linked ATP synthesis as explained by chemiosmotic hypothesis in the earlier chapter. As mentioned earlier, the energy released during the electron transport system is utilised in synthesising ATP with the help of ATP synthase (complex V). This complex consists of two major components, F_1 and F_0 (Figure 12.5). The F_1 headpiece is a peripheral membrane protein complex and contains the site for synthesis of ATP from ADP and inorganic phosphate. F_0 is an integral membrane protein complex that forms the channel through which protons cross the inner membrane. The passage of protons through the channel is coupled to the catalytic site of the F_1 component for the production of ATP. For each ATP produced, $4H^+$ pass through F_0 from the intermembrane space to the matrix down the electrochemical proton gradient.

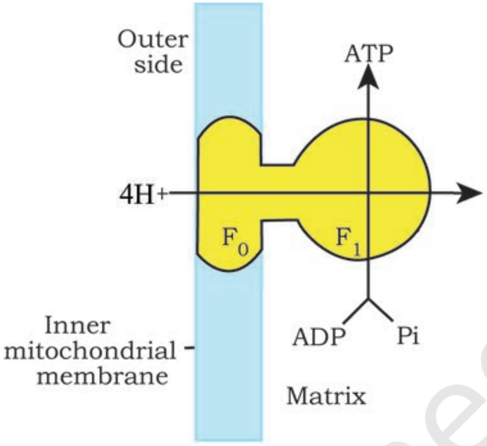

Figure 12.5 Diagramatic presentation of ATP synthesis in mitochondria

12.5 THE RESPIRATORY BALANCE SHEET

It is possible to make calculations of the net gain of ATP for every glucose molecule oxidised; but in reality this can remain only a theoretical exercise. These calculations can be made only on certain assumptions that:

- There is a sequential, orderly pathway functioning, with one substrate forming the next and with glycolysis, TCA cycle and ETS pathway following one after another.
- The NADH synthesised in glycolysis is transferred into the mitochondria and undergoes oxidative phosphorylation.
- None of the intermediates in the pathway are utilised to synthesise any other compound.
- Only glucose is being respired – no other alternative substrates are entering in the pathway at any of the intermediary stages.

But this kind of assumptions are not really valid in a living system; all pathways work simultaneously and do not take place one after another; substrates enter the pathways and are withdrawn from it as and when necessary; ATP is utilised as and when needed; enzymatic rates are controlled by multiple means. Yet, it is useful to do this exercise to appreciate the beauty and efficiency of the living system in extraction and storing energy. Hence, there can be a net gain of 38 ATP molecules during aerobic respiration of one molecule of glucose.

Now let us compare fermentation and aerobic respiration:

- Fermentation accounts for only a partial breakdown of glucose whereas in aerobic respiration it is completely degraded to CO_2 and H_2O.
- In fermentation there is a net gain of only two molecules of ATP for each molecule of glucose degraded to pyruvic acid whereas many more molecules of ATP are generated under aerobic conditions.
- NADH is oxidised to NAD^+ rather slowly in fermentation, however the reaction is very vigorous in case of aerobic respiration.

12.6 AMPHIBOLIC PATHWAY

Glucose is the favoured substrate for respiration. All carbohydrates are usually first converted into glucose before they are used for respiration. Other substrates can also be respired, as has been mentioned earlier, but then they do not enter the respiratory pathway at the first step. See Figure 12.6 to see the points of entry of different substrates in the respiratory pathway. Fats would need to be broken down into glycerol and fatty acids first. If fatty acids were to be respired they would first be degraded to acetyl CoA and enter the pathway. Glycerol would enter the pathway after being converted to PGAL. The proteins would be degraded by proteases and the individual amino acids (after deamination) depending on their structure would enter the pathway at some stage within the Krebs' cycle or even as pyruvate or acetyl CoA.

Since respiration involves breakdown of substrates, the respiratory process has traditionally been considered a catabolic process and the respiratory pathway as a catabolic pathway. But is this understanding correct? We have discussed above, at which points in the respiratory pathway different substrates would enter if they were to be respired and used to derive energy. What is important to recognise is that it is these very compounds that would be withdrawn from the respiratory pathway for the synthesis of the said substrates. Hence, fatty acids would be broken down to acetyl CoA before entering the respiratory pathway when it is used as a substrate. But when the organism needs to synthesise fatty acids, acetyl CoA would be withdrawn from the respiratory pathway for it. Hence, the respiratory pathway comes into the picture both during breakdown and synthesis of fatty acids. Similarly, during breakdown and synthesis of protein too, respiratory intermediates form the link. Breaking down processes within the living organism is catabolism, and synthesis is anabolism. Because the respiratory pathway is involved in both anabolism and catabolism, it would hence be better to consider the respiratory pathway as an **amphibolic pathway** rather than as a catabolic one.

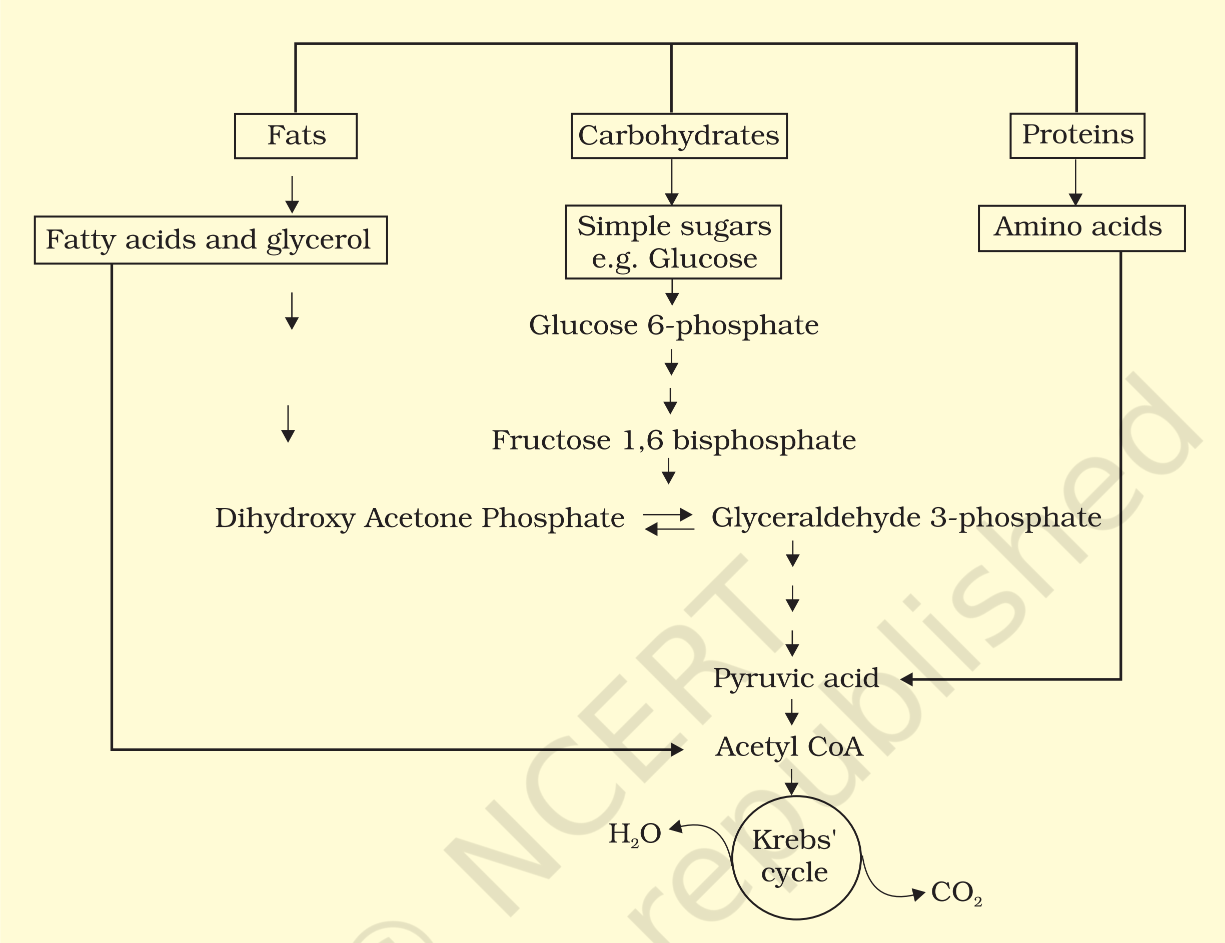
Fats
Carbohydrates
Proteins
Fatty acids and glycerol
Simple sugars e.g. Glucose
Amino acids
Glucose 6-phosphate
Fructose 1,6 bisphosphate
Dihydroxy Acetone Phosphate
Glyceraldehyde 3-phosphate
Pyruvic acid
Acetyl CoA
Krebs' cycle
H2O
CO2

Figure 12.6 Interrelationship among metabolic pathways showing respiration mediated breakdown of different organic molecules to CO_2 and H_20

12.7 RESPIRATORY QUOTIENT

Let us now look at another aspect of respiration. As you know, during aerobic respiration, O_2 is consumed and CO_2 is released. The ratio of the volume of CO_2 evolved to the volume of O_2 consumed in respiration is called the **respiratory quotient** (RQ) or respiratory ratio.

$$RQ = \frac{\text{volume of } CO_2 \text{ evolved}}{\text{volume of } O_2 \text{ consumed}}$$

The respiratory quotient depends upon the type of respiratory substrate used during respiration.

When carbohydrates are used as substrate and are completely oxidised, the RQ will be 1, because equal amounts of CO_2 and O_2 are evolved and consumed, respectively, as shown in the equation below :

$$C_6H_{12}O_6 + 6O_2 \longrightarrow 6CO_2 + 6H_2O + \text{Energy}$$

$$RQ = \frac{6CO_2}{6O_2} = 1.0$$

When fats are used in respiration, the RQ is less than 1. Calculations for a fatty acid, tripalmitin, if used as a substrate is shown:

$$\underset{\text{Tripalmitin}}{2(C_{51}H_{98}O_6)} + 145O_2 \longrightarrow 102CO_2 + 98H_2O + \text{energy}$$

$$RQ = \frac{102CO_2}{145O_2} = 0.7$$

When proteins are respiratory substrates the ratio would be about 0.9.

What is important to recognise is that in living organisms, respiratory substrates are often more than one; pure proteins or fats are never used as respiratory substrates.

SUMMARY

Plants unlike animals have no special systems for breathing or gaseous exchange. Stomata and lenticels allow gaseous exchange by diffusion. Almost all living cells in a plant have their surfaces exposed to air.

The breaking of C-C bonds of complex organic molecules by oxidation leading to the release of a lot of energy is called cellular respiration. Glucose is the favoured substrate for respiration. Fats and proteins can also be broken down to yield energy. The initial stage of cellular respiration takes place in the cytoplasm. Each glucose molecule is broken through a series of enzyme catalysed reactions into two molecules of pyruvic acid. This process is called glycolysis. The fate of the pyruvate depends on the availability of oxygen and the organism. Under anaerobic conditions either lactic acid fermentation or alcohol fermentation occurs. Fermentation takes place under anaerobic conditions in many prokaryotes, unicellular eukaryotes and in germinating seeds. In eukaryotic organisms aerobic respiration occurs in the presence of oxygen. Pyruvic acid is transported into the mitochondria where it is converted into acetyl CoA with the release of CO_2. Acetyl CoA then enters the tricarboxylic acid pathway or Krebs' cycle operating in the matrix of the mitochondria. NADH + H^+ and $FADH_2$ are generated in the Krebs' cycle. The energy in these molecules as well as that in the NADH+ H^+ synthesised during glycolysis are used to synthesise ATP. This is accomplished through a system of electron carriers called electron transport system (ETS) located on the inner membrane of the mitochondria. The electrons, as they move through the system, release enough energy that are trapped to synthesise ATP. This is called oxidative phosphorylation. In this process O_2 is the ultimate acceptor of electrons and it gets reduced to water.

The respiratory pathway is an amphibolic pathway as it involves both anabolism and catabolism. The respiratory quotient depends upon the type of respiratory substance used during respiration.

EXERCISES

1. Differentiate between
   (a) Respiration and Combustion
   (b) Glycolysis and Krebs' cycle
   (c) Aerobic respiration and Fermentation
2. What are respiratory substrates? Name the most common respiratory substrate.
3. Give the schematic representation of glycolysis?
4. What are the main steps in aerobic respiration? Where does it take place?
5. Give the schematic representation of an overall view of Krebs' cycle.
6. Explain ETS.
7. Distinguish between the following:
   (a) Aerobic respiration and Anaerobic respiration
   (b) Glycolysis and Fermentation
   (c) Glycolysis and Citric acid Cycle
8. What are the assumptions made during the calculation of net gain of ATP?
9. Discuss "The respiratory pathway is an amphibolic pathway."
10. Define RQ. What is its value for fats?
11. What is oxidative phosphorylation?
12. What is the significance of step-wise release of energy in respiration?

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CHAPTER 13

PLANT GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

13.1 Growth
13.2 Differentiation, Dedifferentiation and Redifferentiation
13.3 Development
13.4 Plant Growth Regulators

You have already studied the organisation of a flowering plant in Chapter 5. Have you ever thought about where and how the structures like roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds arise and that too in an orderly sequence? You are, by now, aware of the terms seed, seedling, plantlet, mature plant. You have also seen that trees continue to increase in height or girth over a period of time. However, the leaves, flowers and fruits of the same tree not only have limited dimensions but also appear and fall periodically and some time repeatedly. Why does vegetative phase precede flowering in a plant? All plant organs are made up of a variety of tissues; is there any relationship between the structure of a cell, a tissue, an organ and the function they perform? Can the structure and the function of these be altered? All cells of a plant are descendents of the zygote. The question is, then, why and how do they have different structural and functional attributes? Development is the sum of two processes: growth and differentiation. To begin with, it is essential and sufficient to know that the development of a mature plant from a zygote (fertilised egg) follow a precise and highly ordered succession of events. During this process a complex body organisation is formed that produces roots, leaves, branches, flowers, fruits, and seeds, and eventually they die (Figure 13.1). The first step in the process of plant growth is seed germination. The seed germinates when favourable conditions for growth exist in the environment. In absence of such favourable conditions the seeds do not germinate and goes into a period of suspended growth or rest. Once favourable conditions return, the seeds resume metabolic activities and growth takes place.

In this chapter, you shall also study some of the factors which govern and control these developmental processes. These factors are both intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external) to the plant.

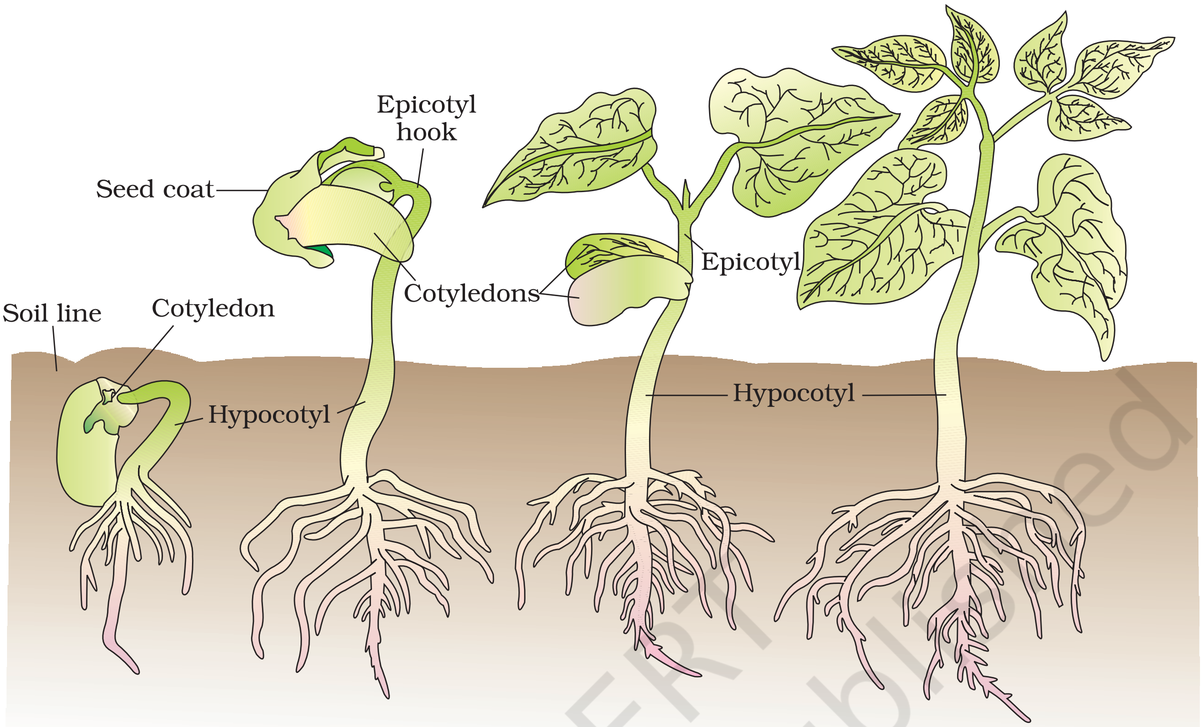


Figure 13.1 Germination and seedling development in bean

13.1 GROWTH

Growth is regarded as one of the most fundamental and conspicuous characteristics of a living being. What is growth? Growth can be defined as an irreversible permanent increase in size of an organ or its parts or even of an individual cell. Generally, growth is accompanied by metabolic processes (both anabolic and catabolic), that occur at the expense of energy. Therefore, for example, expansion of a leaf is growth. How would you describe the swelling of piece of wood when placed in water?

13.1.1 Plant Growth Generally is Indeterminate

Plant growth is unique because plants retain the capacity for unlimited growth throughout their life. This ability of the plants is due to the presence of meristems at certain locations in their body. The cells of such meristems have the capacity to divide and self-perpetuate. The product, however, soon loses the capacity to divide and such cells make up the plant body. This form of growth wherein new cells are always being added to the plant body by the activity of the meristem is called the open form of growth. What would happen if the meristem ceases to divide? Does this ever happen?

In earlier classes, you have studied about the root apical meristem and the shoot apical meristem. You know that they are responsible for the primary growth of the plants and principally contribute to the elongation of the plants along their axis. You also know that in dicotyledonous plants and gymnosperms, the lateral meristems, vascular cambium and cork-cambium appear later in life. These are the meristems that cause the increase in the girth of the organs in which they are active. This is known as secondary growth of the plant (see Figure 13.2).

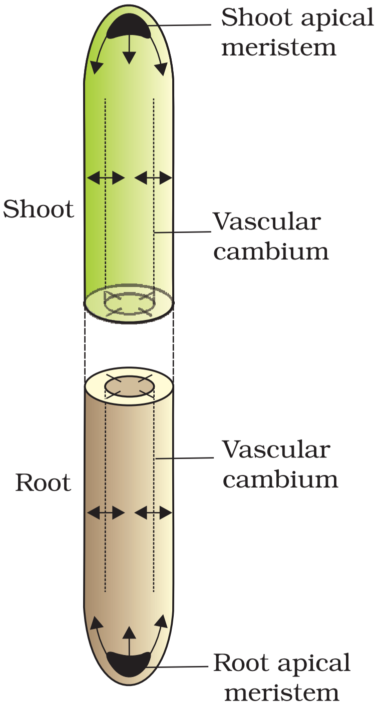


Figure 13.2 Diagrammatic representation of locations of root apical meristem, shoot apical meristem and vascular cambium. Arrows exhibit the direction of growth of cells and organ

13.1.2 Growth is Measurable

Growth, at a cellular level, is principally a consequence of increase in the amount of protoplasm. Since increase in protoplasm is difficult to measure directly, one generally measures some quantity which is more or less proportional to it. Growth is, therefore, measured by a variety of parameters some of which are: increase in fresh weight, dry weight, length, area, volume and cell number. You may find it amazing to know that one single maize root apical mersitem can give rise to more than 17,500 new cells per hour, whereas cells in a watermelon may increase in size by upto 3,50,000 times. In the former, growth is expressed as increase in cell number; the latter expresses growth as increase in size of the cell. While the growth of a pollen tube is measured in terms of its length, an increase in surface area denotes the growth in a dorsiventral leaf.

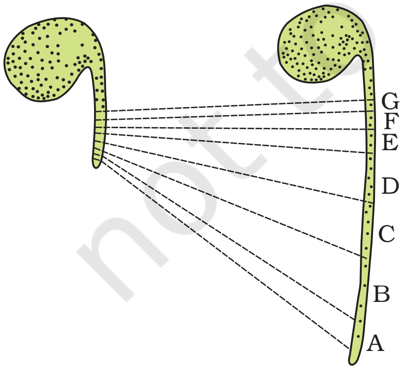


Figure 13.3 Detection of zones of elongation by the parallel line technique. Zones A, B, C, D immediately behind the apex have elongated most.

13.1.3 Phases of Growth

The period of growth is generally divided into three phases, namely, meristematic, elongation and maturation (Figure 13.3). Let us understand this by looking at the root tips. The constantly dividing cells, both at the root apex and the shoot apex, represent the meristematic phase of growth. The cells in this region are rich in protoplasm, possess large conspicuous nuclei. Their cell walls are primary in nature, thin and cellulosic with abundant plasmodesmatal connections. The cells proximal (just next, away from the tip) to the meristematic zone represent the phase of elongation. Increased vacuolation, cell enlargement and new cell wall deposition are the characteristics of the cells in this phase. Further away from the apex, i.e., more proximal to the phase of elongation, lies the portion of axis which is undergoing the phase of maturation. The cells of this zone, attain their maximal size in terms of wall thickening and protoplasmic modifications. Most of the tissues and cell types you have studied in earlier classes represent this phase.

13.1.4 Growth Rates

The increased growth per unit time is termed as growth rate. Thus, rate of growth can be expressed mathematically. An organism, or a part of the organism can produce more cells in a variety of ways.

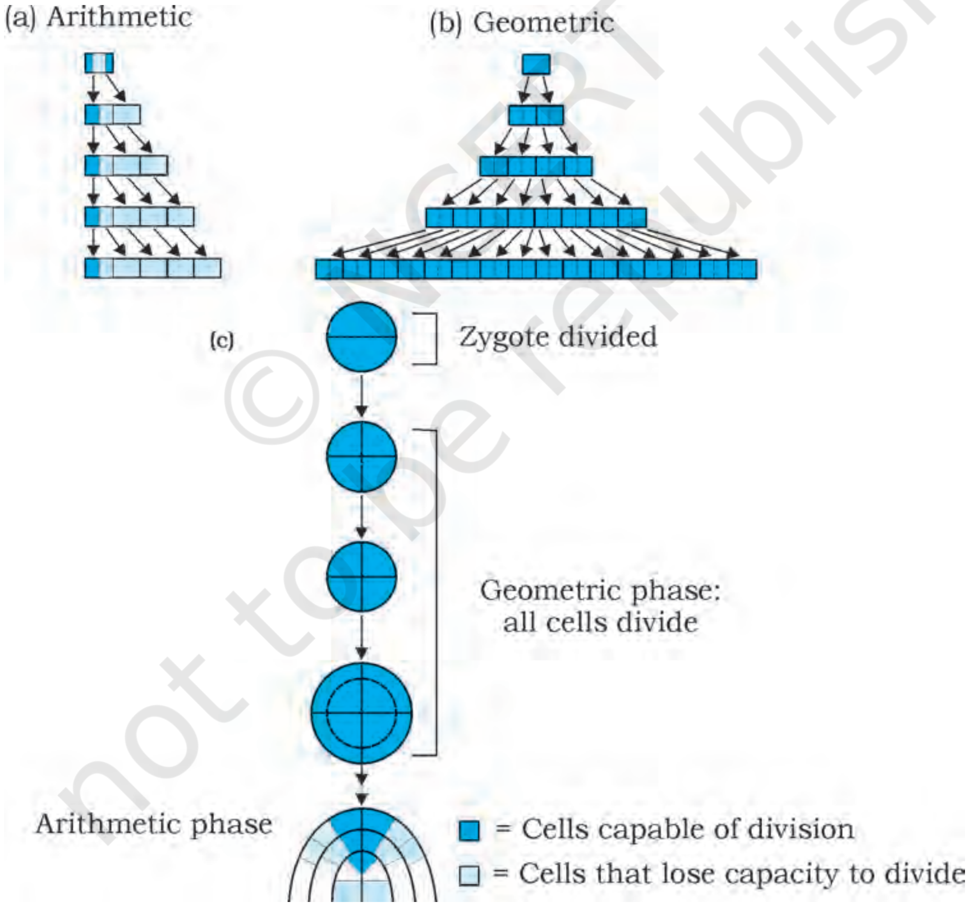

(a) Arithmetic
(b) Geometric
(c)
Zygote divided
Geometric phase: all cells divide
Arithmetic phase
🟦 = Cells capable of division
☐ = Cells that lose capacity to divide

Figure 13.4 Diagrammatic representation of : (a) Arithmetic (b) Geometric growth and (c) Stages during embryo development showing geometric and arithematic phases

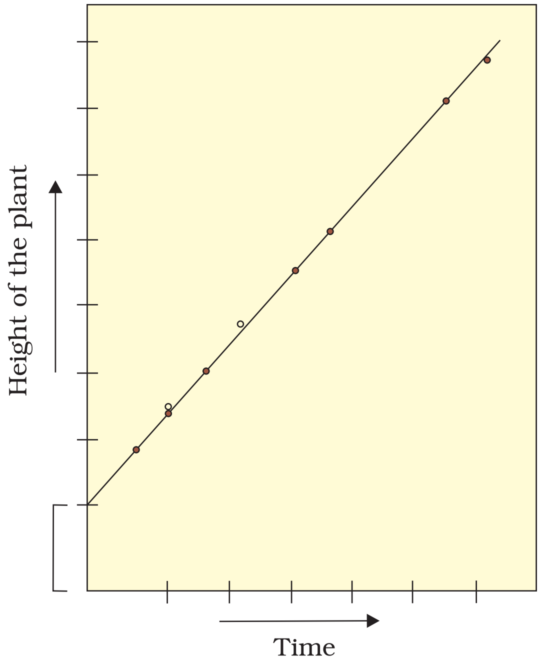


Figure 13.5 Constant linear growth, a plot of length L against time t

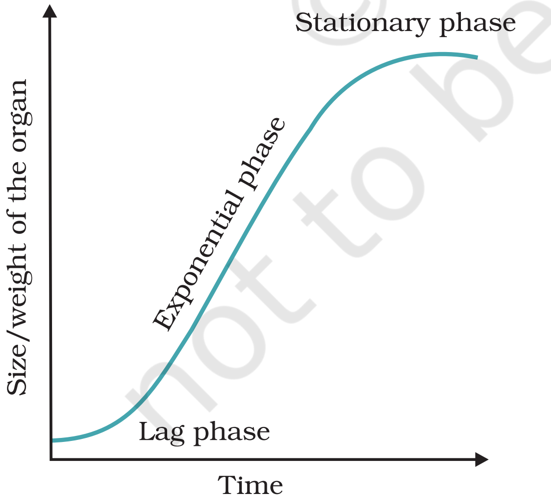


Figure 13.6 An idealised sigmoid growth curve typical of cells in culture, and many higher plants and plant organs

The growth rate shows an increase that may be arithmetic or geometrical (Figure 13.4).

In arithmetic growth, following mitotic cell division, only one daughter cell continues to divide while the other differentiates and matures. The simplest expression of arithmetic growth is exemplified by a root elongating at a constant rate. Look at Figure 13.5. On plotting the length of the organ against time, a linear curve is obtained. Mathematically, it is expressed as

$L_t = L_0 + rt$

L_t = length at time 't'

L_0 = length at time 'zero'

r = growth rate / elongation per unit time.

Let us now see what happens in geometrical growth. In most systems, the initial growth is slow (lag phase), and it increases rapidly thereafter – at an exponential rate (log or exponential phase). Here, both the progeny cells following mitotic cell division retain the ability to divide and continue to do so. However, with limited nutrient supply, the growth slows down leading to a stationary phase. If we plot the parameter of growth against time, we get a typical sigmoid or S-curve (Figure 13.6). A sigmoid curve is a characteristic of living organism growing in a natural environment. It is typical for all cells, tissues and organs of a plant. *Can you think of more similar examples? What kind of a curve can you expect in a tree showing seasonal activities?*

The exponential growth can be expressed as

$W_1 = W_0 e^{rt}$

W_1 = final size (weight, height, number etc.)

W_0 = initial size at the beginning of the period

r = growth rate

t = time of growth

e = base of natural logarithms

Here, r is the relative growth rate and is also the measure of the ability of the plant to produce new plant material, referred to as efficiency index. Hence, the final size of W_1 depends on the initial size, W_0.

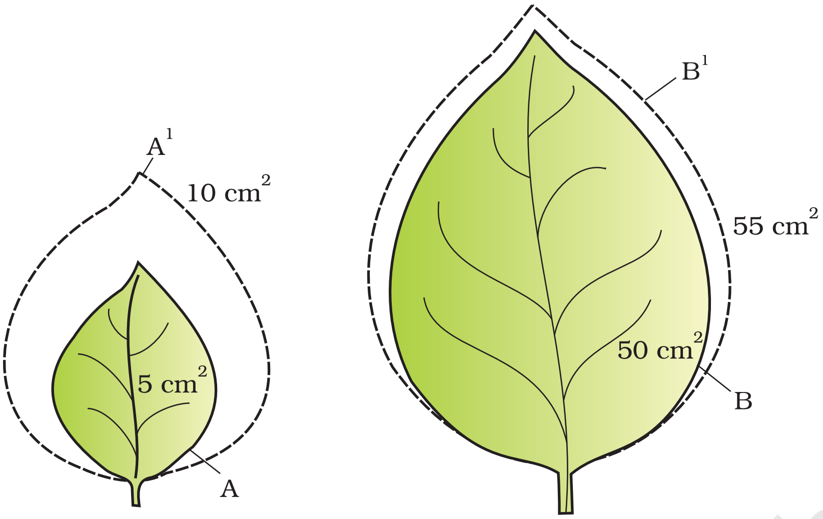


Figure 13.7 Diagrammatic comparison of absolute and relative growth rates. Both leaves A and B have increased their area by 5 cm^2 in a given time to produce A^1, B^1 leaves.

Quantitative comparisons between the growth of living system can also be made in two ways : (i) measurement and the comparison of total growth per unit time is called the absolute growth rate. (ii) The growth of the given system per unit time expressed on a common basis, e.g., per unit initial parameter is called the relative growth rate. In Figure 13.7 two leaves, A and B, are drawn that are of different sizes but shows absolute increase in area in the given time to give leaves, A^1 and B^1. However, one of them shows much higher relative growth rate. Which one and why?

13.1.5 Conditions for Growth

Why do you not try to write down what you think are necessary conditions for growth? This list may have water, oxygen and nutrients as very essential elements for growth. The plant cells grow in size by cell enlargement which in turn requires water. Turgidity of cells helps in extension growth. Thus, plant growth and further development is intimately linked to the water status of the plant. Water also provides the medium for enzymatic activities needed for growth. Oxygen helps in releasing metabolic energy essential for growth activities. Nutrients (macro and micro essential elements) are required by plants for the synthesis of protoplasm and act as source of energy.

In addition, every plant organism has an optimum temperature range best suited for its growth. Any deviation from this range could be detrimental to its survival. Environmental signals such as light and gravity also affect certain phases/stages of growth.

13.2 DIFFERENTIATION, DEDIFFERENTIATION AND REDIFFERENTIATION

The cells derived from root apical and shoot-apical meristems and cambium differentiate and mature to perform specific functions. This act leading to maturation is termed as **differentiation**. During differentiation, cells undergo few to major structural changes both in their cell walls and protoplasm. For example, to form a tracheary element, the cells would lose their protoplasm. They also develop a very strong, elastic, lignocellulosic secondary cell walls, to carry water to long distances even under extreme tension. Try to correlate the various anatomical features you encounter in plants to the functions they perform.

Plants show another interesting phenomenon. The living differentiated cells, that by now have lost the capacity to divide can regain the capacity of division under certain conditions. This phenomenon is termed as **dedifferentiation**. For example, formation of meristems – interfascicular cambium and cork cambium from fully differentiated parenchyma cells. While doing so, such meristems/tissues are able to divide and produce cells that once again lose the capacity to divide but mature to perform specific functions, i.e., get **redifferentiated**. List some of the tissues in a woody dicotyledenous plant that are the products of redifferentiation. How would you describe a tumour? What would you call the parenchyma cells that are made to divide under controlled laboratory conditions during plant tissue culture?

Recall, in Section 13.1.1, we have mentioned that the growth in plants is open, i.e., it can be indeterminate or determinate. Now, we may say that even differentiation in plants is open, because cells/tissues arising out of the same meristem have different structures at maturity. The final structure at maturity of a cell/tissue is also determined by the location of the cell within. For example, cells positioned away from root apical meristems differentiate as root-cap cells, while those pushed to the periphery mature as epidermis. Can you add a few more examples of open differentiation correlating the position of a cell to its position in an organ?

13.3 DEVELOPMENT

Development is a term that includes all changes that an organism goes through during its life cycle from germination of the seed to senescence. Diagrammatic representation of the sequence of processes which constitute the development of a cell of a higher plant is given in Figure 13.8. It is also applicable to tissues/organs.

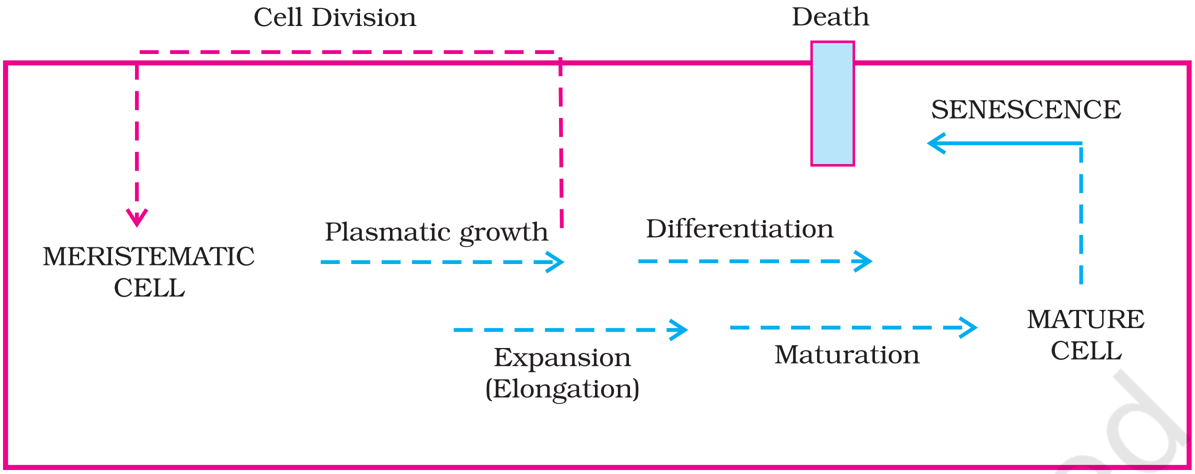

Cell Division
Death
SENESCENCE
MERISTEMATIC CELL
Plasmatic growth
Differentiation
Expansion (Elongation)
Maturation
MATURE CELL

Figure 13.8 Sequence of the developmental process in a plant cell

Plants follow different pathways in response to environment or phases of life to form different kinds of structures. This ability is called **plasticity**, e.g., heterophylly in cotton, coriander and larkspur. In such plants, the leaves of the juvenile plant are different in shape from those in mature plants. On the other hand, difference in shapes of leaves produced in air and those produced in water in buttercup also represent the heterophyllous development due to environment (Figure 13.9). This phenomenon of heterophylly is an example of plasticity.

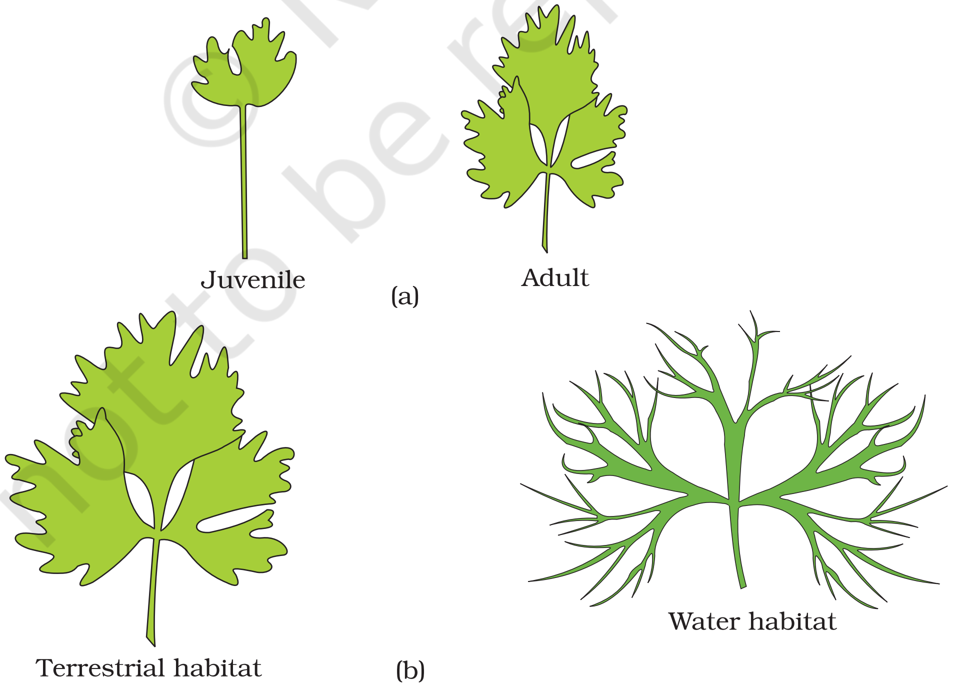

Juvenile
(a)
Adult
Terrestrial habitat
(b)
Water habitat

Figure 13.9 Heterophylly in (a) larkspur and (b) buttercup

Thus, growth, differentiation and development are very closely related events in the life of a plant. Broadly, development is considered as the sum of growth and differentiation. Development in plants (i.e., both growth and differentiation) is under the control of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The former includes both intracellular (genetic) or intercellular factors (chemicals such as plant growth regulators) while the latter includes light, temperature, water, oxygen, nutrition, etc.

13.4 PLANT GROWTH REGULATORS

13.4.1 Characteristics

The plant growth regulators (PGRs) are small, simple molecules of diverse chemical composition. They could be indole compounds (indole-3-acetic acid, IAA); adenine derivatives (N^6-furfurylamino purine, kinetin), derivatives of carotenoids (abscisic acid, ABA); terpenes (gibberellic acid, GA_3) or gases (ethylene, C_2H_4). Plant growth regulators are variously described as plant growth substances, plant hormones or phytohormones in literature.

The PGRs can be broadly divided into two groups based on their functions in a living plant body. One group of PGRs are involved in growth promoting activities, such as cell division, cell enlargement, pattern formation, tropic growth, flowering, fruiting and seed formation. These are also called plant growth promoters, e.g., auxins, gibberellins and cytokinins. The PGRs of the other group play an important role in plant responses to wounds and stresses of biotic and abiotic origin. They are also involved in various growth inhibiting activities such as dormancy and abscission. The PGR abscisic acid belongs to this group. The gaseous PGR, ethylene, could fit either of the groups, but it is largely an inhibitor of growth activities.

13.4.2 The Discovery of Plant Growth Regulators

Interestingly, the discovery of each of the five major groups of PGRs have been accidental. All this started with the observation of Charles Darwin and his son Francis Darwin when they observed that the coleoptiles of canary grass responded to unilateral illumination by growing towards the light source (phototropism). After a series of experiments, it was concluded that the tip of coleoptile was the site of transmittable influence that caused the bending of the entire coleoptile (Figure 13.10). Auxin was isolated by F.W. Went from tips of coleoptiles of oat seedlings.

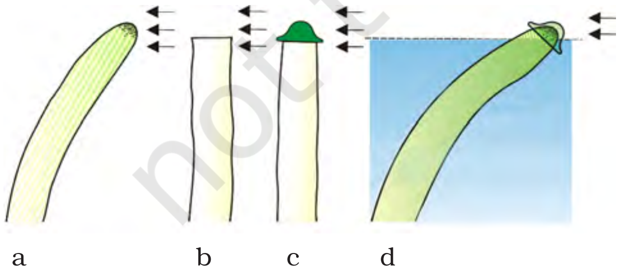


Figure 13.10 Experiment used to demonstrate that tip of the coleoptile is the source of auxin. Arrows indicate direction of light

The 'bakanae' (foolish seedling) disease of rice seedlings, was caused by a fungal pathogen *Gibberella fujikuroi*. E. Kurosawa (1926) reported the appearance of symptoms of the disease in rice seedlings when they were treated with sterile filtrates of the fungus. The active substances were later identified as gibberellic acid.

F. Skoog and his co-workers observed that from the internodal segments of tobacco stems, the callus (a mass of undifferentiated cells) proliferated only if, in addition to auxins the nutrients medium was supplemented with one of the following: extracts of vascular tissues, yeast extract, coconut milk or DNA. Miller et al. (1955), later identified and crystallised the cytokinesis promoting active substance that they termed kinetin.

During mid-1960s, three independent researches reported the purification and chemical characterisation of three different kinds of inhibitors: inhibitor-B, abscission II and dormin. Later all the three were proved to be chemically identical. It was named abscisic acid (ABA).

H.H. Cousins (1910) confirmed the release of a volatile substance from ripened oranges that hastened the ripening of stored unripened bananas. Later this volatile substance was identified as ethylene, a gaseous PGR.

Let us study some of the physiological effects of these five categories of PGRs in the next section.

13.4.3 Physiological Effects of Plant Growth Regulators

13.4.3.1 Auxins

Auxins (from Greek 'auxein' : to grow) was first isolated from human urine. The term 'auxin' is applied to the indole-3-acetic acid (IAA), and to other natural and synthetic compounds having certain growth regulating properties. They are generally produced by the growing apices of the stems and roots, from where they migrate to the regions of their action. Auxins like IAA and indole butyric acid (IBA) have been isolated from plants. NAA (naphthalene acetic acid) and 2, 4-D (2, 4-dichlorophenoxyacetic) are synthetic auxins. All these auxins have been used extensively in agricultural and horticultural practices.

They help to initiate rooting in stem cuttings, an application widely used for plant propagation. Auxins promote flowering e.g. in pineapples. They help to prevent fruit and leaf drop at early stages but promote the abscission of older mature leaves and fruits.

In most higher plants, the growing apical bud inhibits the growth of the lateral (axillary) buds, a phenomenon called **apical dominance**. Removal of shoot tips (decapitation) usually results in the growth of lateral buds (Figure 13.11). It is widely applied in tea plantations and hedge-making. Can you explain why?

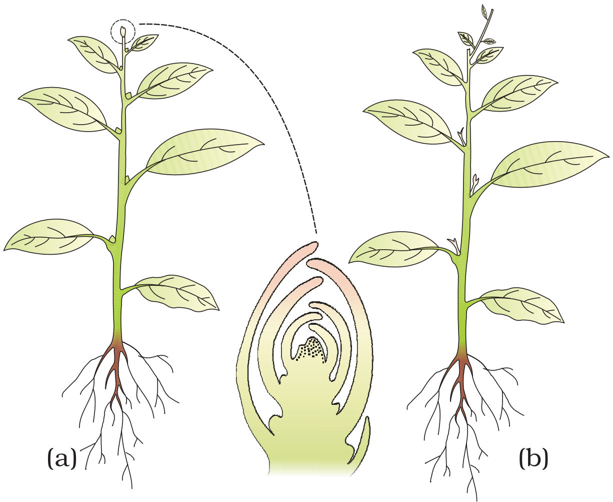


Figure 13.11 Apical dominance in plants : (a) A plant with apical bud intact (b) A plant with apical bud removed Note the growth of lateral buds into branches after decapitation.

Auxins also induce parthenocarpy, e.g., in tomatoes. They are widely used as herbicides. 2, 4-D, widely used to kill dicotyledonous weeds, does not affect mature monocotyledonous plants. It is used to prepare weed-free lawns by gardeners. Auxin also controls xylem differentiation and helps in cell division.

13.4.3.2 Gibberellins

Gibberellins are another kind of promotory PGR. There are more than 100 gibberellins reported from widely different organisms such as fungi and higher plants. They are denoted as GA_1, GA_2, GA_3 and so on. However, Gibberellic acid (GA_3) was one of the first gibberellins to be discovered and remains the most intensively studied form. All GAs are acidic. They produce a wide range of physiological responses in the plants. Their ability to cause an increase in length of axis is used to increase the length of grapes stalks. Gibberellins, cause fruits like apple to elongate and improve its shape. They also delay senescence. Thus, the fruits can be left on the tree longer so as to extend the market period. GA_3 is used to speed up the malting process in brewing industry.

Sugarcane stores carbohydrate as sugar in their stems. Spraying sugarcane crop with gibberellins increases the length of the stem, thus increasing the yield by as much as 20 tonnes per acre.

Spraying juvenile conifers with GAs hastens the maturity period, thus leading to early seed production. Gibberellins also promotes bolting (internode elongation just prior to flowering) in beet, cabbages and many plants with rosette habit.

13.4.3.3 Cytokinins

Cytokinins have specific effects on cytokinesis, and were discovered as kinetin (a modified form of adenine, a purine) from the autoclaved herring sperm DNA. Kinetin does not occur naturally in plants. Search for natural substances with cytokinin-like activities led to the isolation of zeatin from corn-kernels and coconut milk. Since the discovery of zeatin, several naturally occurring cytokinins, and some synthetic compounds with cell division promoting activity, have been identified. Natural cytokinins are synthesised in regions where rapid cell division occurs, for example, root apices, developing shoot buds, young fruits etc. It helps to produce new leaves, chloroplasts in leaves, lateral shoot growth and adventitious shoot formation. Cytokinins help overcome the apical dominance. They promote nutrient mobilisation which helps in the delay of leaf senescence.

13.4.3.4 Ethylene

Ethylene is a simple gaseous PGR. It is synthesised in large amounts by tissues undergoing senescence and ripening fruits. Influences of ethylene on plants include horizontal growth of seedlings, swelling of the axis and apical hook formation in dicot seedlings. Ethylene promotes senescence and abscission of plant organs especially of leaves and flowers. Ethylene is highly effective in fruit ripening. It enhances the respiration rate during ripening of the fruits. This rise in rate of respiration is called respiratory climactic.

Ethylene breaks seed and bud dormancy, initiates germination in peanut seeds, sprouting of potato tubers. Ethylene promotes rapid internode/petiole elongation in deep water rice plants. It helps leaves/ upper parts of the shoot to remain above water. Ethylene also promotes root growth and root hair formation, thus helping the plants to increase their absorption surface.

Ethylene is used to initiate flowering and for synchronising fruit-set in pineapples. It also induces flowering in mango. Since ethylene regulates so many physiological processes, it is one of the most widely used PGR in agriculture. The most widely used compound as source of ethylene is ethephon. Ethephon in an aqueous solution is readily absorbed and transported within the plant and releases ethylene slowly. Ethephon hastens fruit ripening in tomatoes and apples and accelerates abscission in flowers and fruits (thinning of cotton, cherry, walnut). It promotes female flowers in cucumbers thereby increasing the yield.

13.4.3.5 Abscisic acid

As mentioned earlier, abscisic acid **(ABA)** was discovered for its role in regulating abscission and dormancy. But like other PGRs, it also has other wide ranging effects on plant growth and development. It acts as a general plant growth inhibitor and an inhibitor of plant metabolism. ABA inhibits seed germination. ABA stimulates the closure of stomata and increases the tolerance of plants to various kinds of stresses. Therefore, it is also called the stress hormone. ABA plays an important role in seed development, maturation and dormancy. By inducing dormancy, ABA helps seeds to withstand desiccation and other factors unfavourable for growth. In most situations, ABA acts as an antagonist to GAs.

We may summarise that for any and every phase of growth, differentiation and development of plants, one or the other PGR has some role to play. Such roles could be complimentary or antagonistic. These could be individualistic or synergistic.

Similarly, there are a number of events in the life of a plant where more than one PGR interact to affect that event, e.g., dormancy in seeds/ buds, abscission, senescence, apical dominance, etc.

Remember, the role of PGR is of only one kind of intrinsic control. Along with genomic control and extrinsic factors, they play an important role in plant growth and development. Many of the extrinsic factors such as temperature and light, control plant growth and development via PGR. Some of such events could be: vernalisation, flowering, dormancy, seed germination, plant movements, etc.

We shall discuss briefly the role of light and temperature (both of them, the extrinsic factors) on initiation of flowering.

SUMMARY

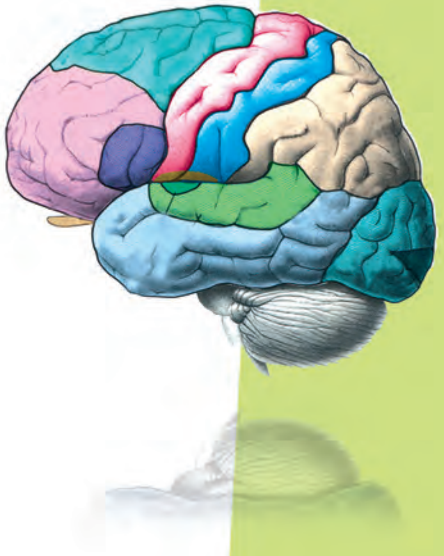
Growth is one of the most conspicuous events in any living organism. It is an irreversible increase expressed in parameters such as size, area, length, height, volume, cell number etc. It conspicuously involves increased protoplasmic material. In plants, meristems are the sites of growth. Root and shoot apical meristems sometimes alongwith intercalary meristem, contribute to the elongation growth of plant axes. Growth is indeterminate in higher plants. Following cell division in root and shoot apical meristem cells, the growth could be arithmetic or geometrical. Growth may not be and generally is not sustained at a high rate throughout the life of cell/ tissue/organ/organism. One can define three principle phases of growth – the lag, the log and the senescent phase. When a cell loses the capacity to divide, it leads to differentiation. Differentiation results in development of structures that is commensurate with the function the cells finally has to perform. General principles for differentiation for cell, tissues and organs are similar. A differentiated cell may dedifferentiate and then redifferentiate. Since differentiation in plants is open, the development could also be flexible, i.e., the development is the sum of growth and differentiation. Plant exhibit plasticity in development.

Plant growth and development are under the control of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intercellular intrinsic factors are the chemical substances, called plant growth regulators (PGR). There are diverse groups of PGRs in plants, principally belonging to five groups: auxins, gibberellins, cytokinins, abscisic acid and ethylene. These PGRs are synthesised in various parts of the plant; they control different differentiation and developmental events. Any PGR has diverse physiological effects on plants. Diverse PGRs also manifest similar effects. PGRs may act synergistically or antagonistically. Plant growth and development is also affected by light, temperature, nutrition, oxygen status, gravity and such external factors.

EXERCISES

1. Define growth, differentiation, development, dedifferentiation, redifferentiation, determinate growth, meristem and growth rate.
2. Why is not any one parameter good enough to demonstrate growth throughout the life of a flowering plant?
3. Describe briefly:
   (a) Arithmetic growth
   (b) Geometric growth
   (c) Sigmoid growth curve
   (d) Absolute and relative growth rates
4. List five main groups of natural plant growth regulators. Write a note on discovery, physiological functions and agricultural/horticultural applications of any one of them.
5. Why is abscisic acid also known as stress hormone?
6. 'Both growth and differentiation in higher plants are *open*'. Comment.
7. 'Both a short day plant and a long day plant can produce can flower simultaneously in a given place'. Explain.
8. Which one of the plant growth regulators would you use if you are asked to:
   (a) induce rooting in a twig
   (b) quickly ripen a fruit
   (c) delay leaf senescence
   (d) induce growth in axillary buds
   (e) 'bolt' a rosette plant
   (f) induce immediate stomatal closure in leaves.
9. Would a defoliated plant respond to photoperiodic cycle? Why?

10. What would be expected to happen if:
    (a) GA_3 is applied to rice seedlings
    (b) dividing cells stop differentiating
    (c) a rotten fruit gets mixed with unripe fruits
    (d) you forget to add cytokinin to the culture medium.



UNIT 5

HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY

Chapter 14
Breathing and Exchange of Gases

Chapter 15
Body Fluids and Circulation

Chapter 16
Excretory Products and their Elimination

Chapter 17
Locomotion and Movement

Chapter 18
Neural Control and Coordination

Chapter 19
Chemical Coordination and Integration

The reductionist approach to study of life forms resulted in increasing use of physico-chemical concepts and techniques. Majority of these studies employed either surviving tissue model or straightaway cell-free systems. An explosion of knowledge resulted in molecular biology. Molecular physiology became almost synonymous with biochemistry and biophysics. However, it is now being increasingly realised that neither a purely organismic approach nor a purely reductionistic molecular approach would reveal the truth about biological processes or living phenomena. Systems biology makes us believe that all living phenomena are emergent properties due to interaction among components of the system under study. Regulatory network of molecules, supra molecular assemblies, cells, tissues, organisms and indeed, populations and communities, each create emergent properties. In the chapters under this unit, major human physiological processes like, exchange of gases, blood circulation, locomotion and movement are described in cellular and molecular terms. The last two chapters point to the coordination and regulation of body events at the organismic level.

Alfonso Corti
(1822 – 1888)

ALFONSO CORTI, Italian anatomist, was born in 1822. Corti began his scientific career studying the cardiovascular systems of reptiles. Later, he turned his attention to the mammalian auditory system. In 1851, he published a paper describing a structure located on the basilar membrane of the cochlea containing hair cells that convert sound vibrations into nerve impulses, the organ of Corti. He died in the year 1888.

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CHAPTER 14

BREATHING AND EXCHANGE OF GASES

14.1 Respiratory Organs
14.2 Mechanism of Breathing
14.3 Exchange of Gases
14.4 Transport of Gases
14.5 Regulation of Respiration
14.6 Disorders of Respiratory System

As you have read earlier, oxygen (O_2) is utilised by the organisms to indirectly break down simple molecules like glucose, amino acids, fatty acids, etc., to derive energy to perform various activities. Carbon dioxide (CO_2) which is harmful is also released during the above catabolic reactions. It is, therefore, evident that O_2 has to be continuously provided to the cells and CO_2 produced by the cells have to be released out. This process of exchange of O_2 from the atmosphere with CO_2 produced by the cells is called **breathing,** commonly known as **respiration**. Place your hands on your chest; you can feel the chest moving up and down. You know that it is due to breathing. How do we breathe? The respiratory organs and the mechanism of breathing are described in the following sections of this chapter.

14.1 RESPIRATORY ORGANS

Mechanisms of breathing vary among different groups of animals depending mainly on their habitats and levels of organisation. Lower invertebrates like sponges, coelenterates, flatworms, etc., exchange O_2 with CO_2 by simple diffusion over their entire body surface. Earthworms use their moist cuticle and insects have a network of tubes (tracheal tubes) to transport atmospheric air within the body. Special vascularised structures called **gills** (branchial respiration) are used by most of the aquatic arthropods and molluscs whereas vascularised bags called **lungs** (pulmonary respiration) are used by the terrestrial forms for the exchange of gases. Among vertebrates, fishes use gills whereas amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals respire through lungs. Amphibians like frogs can respire through their moist skin (cutaneous respiration) also.

14.1.1 Human Respiratory System

We have a pair of external nostrils opening out above the upper lips. It leads to a nasal chamber through the nasal passage. The nasal chamber opens into the **pharynx**, a portion of which is the common passage for food and air. The pharynx opens through the larynx region into the **trachea**. Larynx is a cartilaginous box which helps in sound production and hence called the **sound box**. During swallowing glottis can be covered by a thin elastic cartilaginous flap called epiglottis to prevent the entry of food into the larynx. Trachea is a straight tube extending up to the mid-thoracic cavity, which divides at the level of 5th thoracic vertebra into a right and left primary **bronchi**. Each bronchi undergoes repeated divisions to form the secondary and tertiary bronchi and bronchioles ending up in very thin terminal **bronchioles**. The tracheae, primary, secondary and tertiary bronchi, and initial bronchioles are supported by incomplete cartilaginous rings. Each terminal bronchiole gives rise to a number of very thin, irregular-walled and vascularised bag-like structures called **alveoli**. The branching network of bronchi, bronchioles and alveoli comprise the lungs (Figure 14.1). We have two lungs which are covered by a double layered pleura, with pleural fluid between them. It reduces friction on the lung-surface. The outer pleural membrane is in close contact with the thoracic

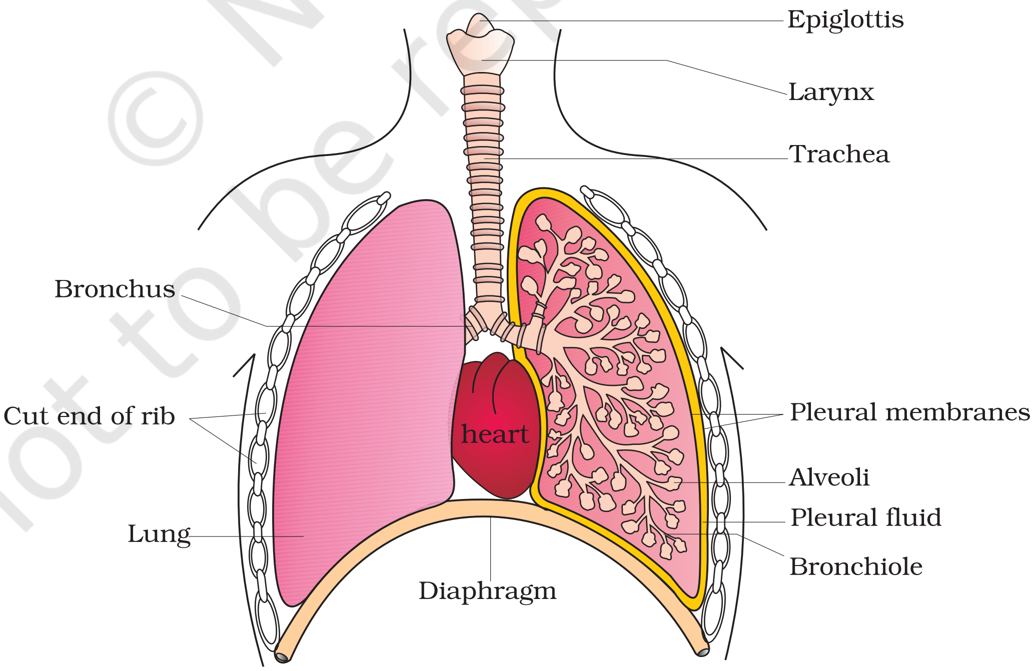

Figure 14.1 Diagrammatic view of human respiratory system (sectional view of the left lung is also shown)

lining whereas the inner pleural membrane is in contact with the lung surface. The part starting with the external nostrils up to the terminal bronchioles constitute the conducting part whereas the alveoli and their ducts form the respiratory or exchange part of the respiratory system. The conducting part transports the atmospheric air to the alveoli, clears it from foreign particles, humidifies and also brings the air to body temperature. Exchange part is the site of actual diffusion of O_2 and CO_2 between blood and atmospheric air.

The lungs are situated in the thoracic chamber which is anatomically an air-tight chamber. The thoracic chamber is formed dorsally by the vertebral column, ventrally by the sternum, laterally by the ribs and on the lower side by the dome-shaped diaphragm. The anatomical setup of lungs in thorax is such that any change in the volume of the thoracic cavity will be reflected in the lung (pulmonary) cavity. Such an arrangement is essential for breathing, as we cannot directly alter the pulmonary volume.

Respiration involves the following steps:

(i) Breathing or pulmonary ventilation by which atmospheric air is drawn in and CO_2 rich alveolar air is released out.

(ii) Diffusion of gases (O_2 and CO_2) across alveolar membrane.

(iii) Transport of gases by the blood.

(iv) Diffusion of O_2 and CO_2 between blood and tissues.

(v) Utilisation of O_2 by the cells for catabolic reactions and resultant release of CO_2 (cellular respiration as dealt in the Chapter 12).

14.2 MECHANISM OF BREATHING

Breathing involves two stages : **inspiration** during which atmospheric air is drawn in and **expiration** by which the alveolar air is released out. The movement of air into and out of the lungs is carried out by creating a pressure gradient between the lungs and the atmosphere. Inspiration can occur if the pressure within the lungs (intra-pulmonary pressure) is less than the atmospheric pressure, i.e., there is a negative pressure in the lungs with respect to atmospheric pressure. Similarly, expiration takes place when the intra-pulmonary pressure is higher than the atmospheric pressure. The diaphragm and a specialised set of muscles – external and internal intercostals between the ribs, help in generation of such gradients. Inspiration is initiated by the contraction of diaphragm which increases the volume of thoracic chamber in the antero-posterior axis. The contraction of external inter-costal muscles lifts up the ribs and the

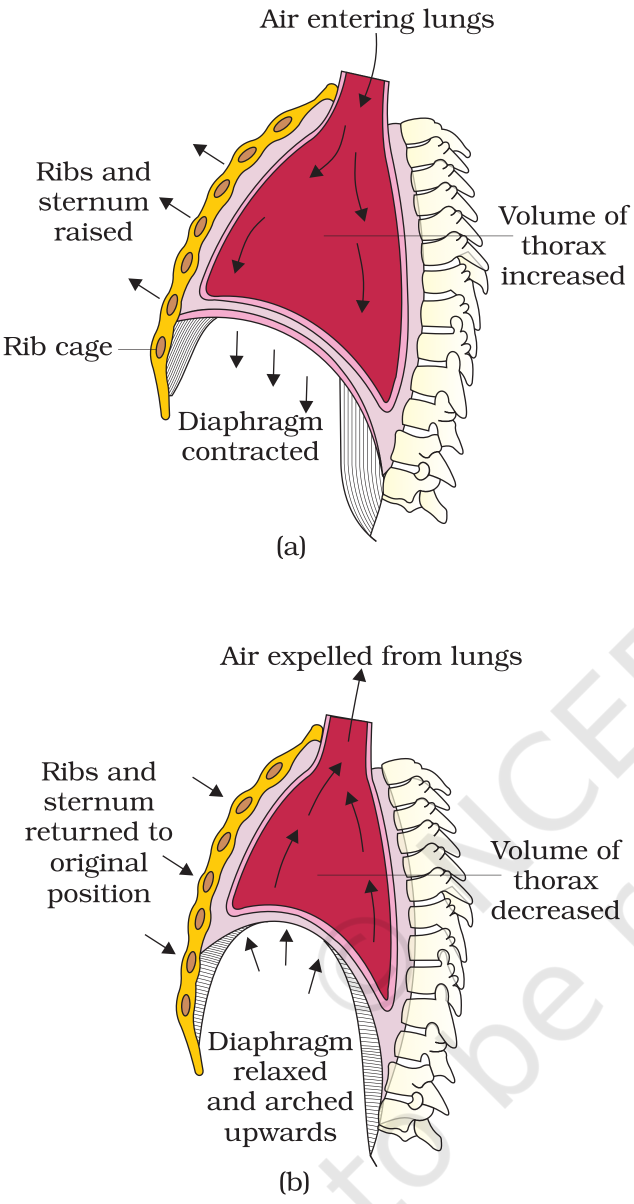
Air entering lungs
Ribs and sternum raised
Volume of thorax increased
Rib cage
Diaphragm contracted
(a)
Air expelled from lungs
Ribs and sternum returned to original position
Volume of thorax decreased
Diaphragm relaxed and arched upwards
(b)

Figure 14.2 Mechanism of breathing showing : (a) inspiration (b) expiration

sternum causing an increase in the volume of the thoracic chamber in the dorso-ventral axis. The overall increase in the thoracic volume causes a similar increase in pulmonary volume. An increase in pulmonary volume decreases the intra-pulmonary pressure to less than the atmospheric pressure which forces the air from outside to move into the lungs, i.e., inspiration (Figure 14.2a). Relaxation of the diaphragm and the inter-costal muscles returns the diaphragm and sternum to their normal positions and reduce the thoracic volume and thereby the pulmonary volume. This leads to an increase in intra-pulmonary pressure to slightly above the atmospheric pressure causing the expulsion of air from the lungs, i.e., expiration (Figure 14.2b). We have the ability to increase the strength of inspiration and expiration with the help of additional muscles in the abdomen. On an average, a healthy human breathes 12-16 times/minute. The volume of air involved in breathing movements can be estimated by using a spirometer which helps in clinical assessment of pulmonary functions.

14.2.1 Respiratory Volumes and Capacities

Tidal Volume (TV): Volume of air inspired or expired during a normal respiration. It is approx. 500 mL., i.e., a healthy man can inspire or expire approximately 6000 to 8000 mL of air per minute.

Inspiratory Reserve Volume (IRV): A person can inspire by a forcible inspiration. This averages 2500 mL to 3000 mL.

Expiratory Reserve Volume (ERV): A person can expire by a forcible expiration. This averages 1000 mL to 1100 mL.

Residual Volume (RV): Volume of air remaining in the lungs even after a forcible expiration. This averages 1100 mL to 1200 mL.

By adding up a few respiratory volumes described above, one can derive various pulmonary capacities, which can be used in clinical diagnosis.

Inspiratory Capacity (IC): Total volume of air a person can inspire after a normal expiration. This includes tidal volume and inspiratory reserve volume (TV+IRV).

Expiratory Capacity (EC): Total volume of air a person can expire after a normal inspiration. This includes tidal volume and expiratory reserve volume (TV+ERV).

Functional Residual Capacity (FRC): Volume of air that will remain in the lungs after a normal expiration. This includes ERV+RV.

Vital Capacity (VC): The maximum volume of air a person can breathe in after a forced expiration. This includes ERV, TV and IRV or the maximum volume of air a person can breathe out after a forced inspiration.

Total Lung Capacity (TLC): Total volume of air accommodated in the lungs at the end of a forced inspiration. This includes RV, ERV, TV and IRV or vital capacity + residual volume.

14.3 EXCHANGE OF GASES

Alveoli are the primary sites of exchange of gases. Exchange of gases also occur between blood and tissues. O_2 and CO_2 are exchanged in these sites by simple diffusion mainly based on pressure/concentration gradient. Solubility of the gases as well as the thickness of the membranes involved in diffusion are also some important factors that can affect the rate of diffusion.

Pressure contributed by an individual gas in a mixture of gases is called partial pressure and is represented as pO_2 for oxygen and pCO_2 for carbon dioxide. Partial pressures of these two gases in the atmospheric air and the two sites of diffusion are given in Table 14.1 and in Figure 14.3. The data given in the table clearly indicates a concentration gradient for oxygen from alveoli to blood and blood to tissues. Similarly,

TABLE 14.1 Partial Pressures (in mm Hg) of Oxygen and Carbon dioxide at Different Parts Involved in Diffusion in Comparison to those in Atmosphere

Respiratory Gas	Atmospheric Air	Alveoli	Blood (Deoxygenated)	Blood (Oxygenated)	Tissues
O_2	159	104	40	95	40
CO_2	0.3	40	45	40	45

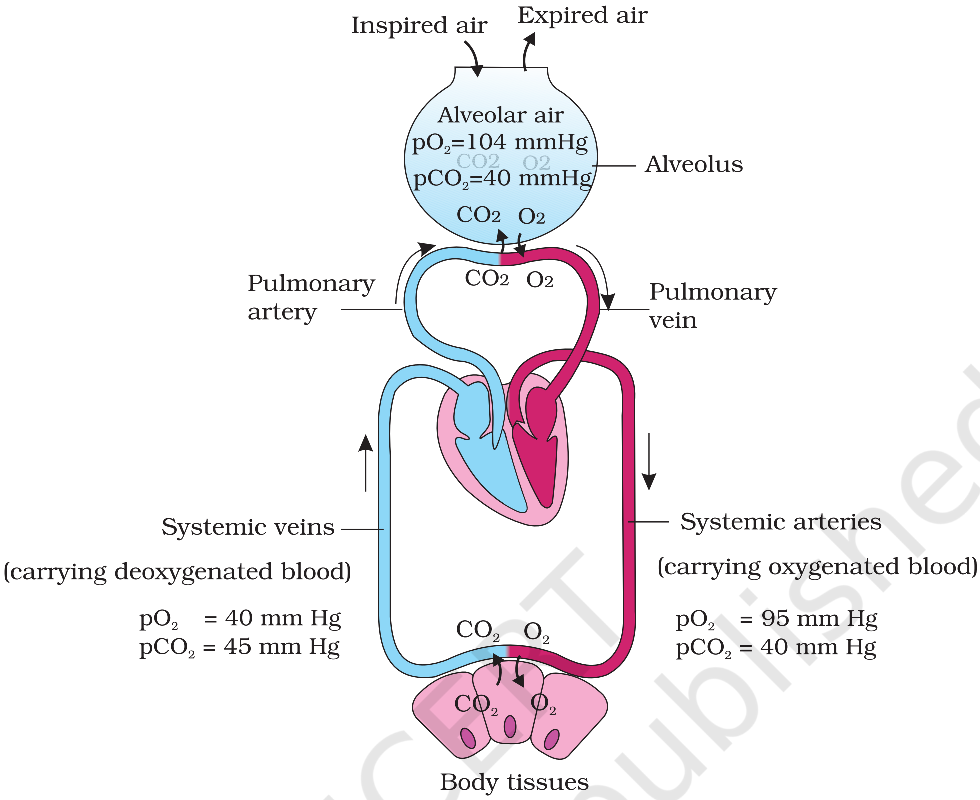
Inspired air
Expired air
Alveolar air
pO_2=104 mmHg
pCO_2=40 mmHg
CO2 O2
CO2 O2
Alveolus
Pulmonary artery
CO2 O2
Pulmonary vein
Systemic veins
(carrying deoxygenated blood)
pO_2 = 40 mm Hg
pCO_2 = 45 mm Hg
Systemic arteries
(carrying oxygenated blood)
pO_2 = 95 mm Hg
pCO_2 = 40 mm Hg
CO_2 O_2
CO_2 O_2
Body tissues

Figure 14.3 Diagrammatic representation of exchange of gases at the alveolus and the body tissues with blood and transport of oxygen and carbon dioxide

a gradient is present for CO_2 in the opposite direction, i.e., from tissues to blood and blood to alveoli. As the solubility of CO_2 is 20-25 times higher than that of O_2, the amount of CO_2 that can diffuse through the diffusion membrane per unit difference in partial pressure is much higher compared to that of O_2. The diffusion membrane is made up of three major layers (Figure 14.4) namely, the thin squamous epithelium of alveoli, the endothelium of alveolar capillaries and the basement substance (composed of a thin basement membrane supporting the squamous epithelium and the basement membrane surrounding the single layer endothelial cells of capillaries) in between them. However, its total thickness is much less than a millimetre. Therefore, all the factors in our body are favourable for diffusion of O_2 from alveoli to tissues and that of CO_2 from tissues to alveoli.

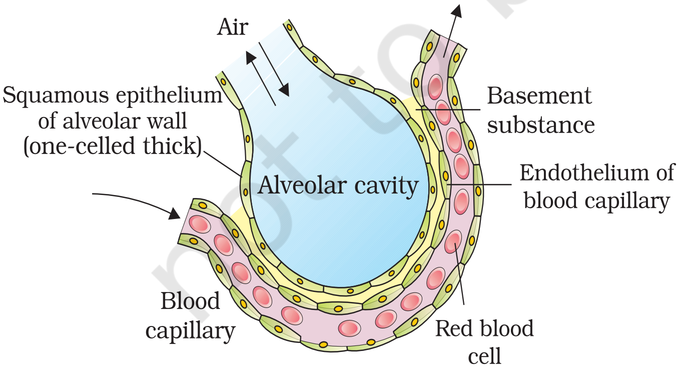
Air
Squamous epithelium of alveolar wall (one-celled thick)
Alveolar cavity
Basement substance
Endothelium of blood capillary
Blood capillary
Red blood cell

Figure 14.4 A Diagram of a section of an alveolus with a pulmonary capillary.

14.4 TRANSPORT OF GASES

Blood is the medium of transport for O_2 and CO_2. About 97 per cent of O_2 is transported by RBCs in the blood. The remaining 3 per cent of O_2 is carried in a dissolved state through the plasma. Nearly 20-25 per cent of CO_2 is transported by RBCs whereas 70 per cent of it is carried as bicarbonate. About 7 per cent of CO_2 is carried in a dissolved state through plasma.

14.4.1 Transport of Oxygen

Haemoglobin is a red coloured iron containing pigment present in the RBCs. O_2 can bind with haemoglobin in a reversible manner to form **oxyhaemoglobin**. Each haemoglobin molecule can carry a maximum of four molecules of O_2. Binding of oxygen with haemoglobin is primarily related to partial pressure of O_2. Partial pressure of CO_2, hydrogen ion concentration and temperature are the other factors which can interfere with this binding. A sigmoid curve is obtained when percentage saturation of haemoglobin with O_2 is plotted against the pO_2. This curve is called the Oxygen dissociation curve (Figure 14.5) and is highly useful in studying the effect of factors like pCO_2, H^+ concentration, etc., on binding of O_2 with haemoglobin. In the alveoli, where there is high pO_2, low pCO_2, lesser H^+ concentration and lower temperature, the factors are all favourable for the formation of oxyhaemoglobin, whereas in the tissues, where low pO_2, high pCO_2, high H^+ concentration and higher temperature exist, the conditions are favourable for dissociation of oxygen from the oxyhaemoglobin. This clearly indicates that O_2 gets bound to haemoglobin in the lung surface and gets dissociated at the tissues. Every 100 ml of oxygenated blood can deliver around 5 ml of O_2 to the tissues under normal physiological conditions.

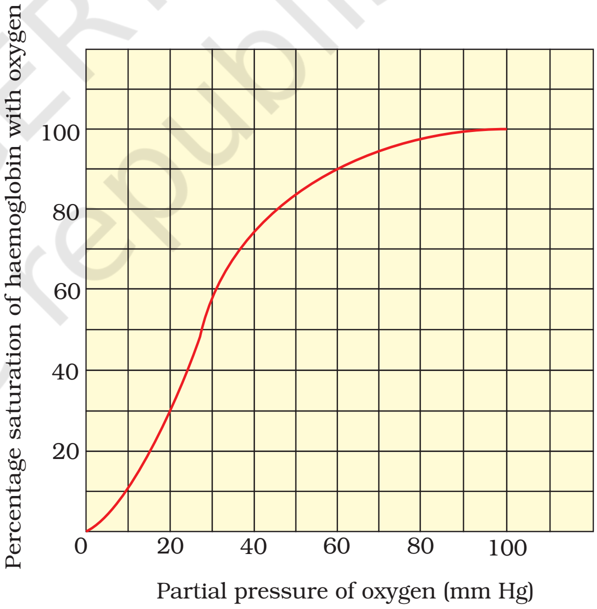

Figure 14.5 Oxygen dissociation curve

14.4.2 Transport of Carbon dioxide

CO_2 is carried by haemoglobin as **carbamino-haemoglobin** (about 20-25 per cent). This binding is related to the partial pressure of CO_2. pO_2 is a major factor which could affect this binding. When pCO_2 is high and pO_2 is low as in the tissues, more binding of carbon dioxide occurs whereas, when the pCO_2 is low and pO_2 is high as in the alveoli, dissociation of CO_2 from carbamino-haemoglobin takes place, i.e., CO_2 which is bound to haemoglobin from the tissues is delivered at the alveoli. RBCs contain a very high concentration of the enzyme, carbonic anhydrase and minute quantities of the same is present in the plasma too. This enzyme facilitates the following reaction in both directions.

$$CO_2 + H_2O \xrightleftharpoons{\text{Carbonic anhydrase}} H_2CO_3 \xrightleftharpoons{\text{Carbonic anhydrase}} HCO_3^- + H^+$$

At the tissue site where partial pressure of CO_2 is high due to catabolism, CO_2 diffuses into blood (RBCs and plasma) and forms HCO_3^- and H^+. At the alveolar site where pCO_2 is low, the reaction proceeds in the opposite direction leading to the formation of CO_2 and H_2O. Thus, CO_2 trapped as bicarbonate at the tissue level and transported to the alveoli is released out as CO_2 (Figure 14.4). Every 100 ml of deoxygenated blood delivers approximately 4 ml of CO_2 to the alveoli.

14.5 REGULATION OF RESPIRATION

Human beings have a significant ability to maintain and moderate the respiratory rhythm to suit the demands of the body tissues. This is done by the neural system. A specialised centre present in the medulla region of the brain called respiratory rhythm centre is primarily responsible for this regulation. Another centre present in the pons region of the brain called pneumotaxic centre can moderate the functions of the respiratory rhythm centre. Neural signal from this centre can reduce the duration of inspiration and thereby alter the respiratory rate. A chemosensitive area is situated adjacent to the rhythm centre which is highly sensitive to CO_2 and hydrogen ions. Increase in these substances can activate this centre, which in turn can signal the rhythm centre to make necessary adjustments in the respiratory process by which these substances can be eliminated. Receptors associated with aortic arch and carotid artery also can recognise changes in CO_2 and H^+ concentration and send necessary signals to the rhythm centre for remedial actions. The role of oxygen in the regulation of respiratory rhythm is quite insignificant.

14.6 DISORDERS OF RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

Asthma is a difficulty in breathing causing wheezing due to inflammation of bronchi and bronchioles.

Emphysema is a chronic disorder in which alveolar walls are damaged due to which respiratory surface is decreased. One of the major causes of this is cigarette smoking.

Occupational Respiratory Disorders: In certain industries, especially those involving grinding or stone-breaking, so much dust is produced that the defense mechanism of the body cannot fully cope with the situation. Long exposure can give rise to inflammation leading to fibrosis (proliferation of fibrous tissues) and thus causing serious lung damage. Workers in such industries should wear protective masks.

SUMMARY

Cells utilise oxygen for metabolism and produce energy along with substances like carbon dioxide which is harmful. Animals have evolved different mechanisms for the transport of oxygen to the cells and for the removal of carbon dioxide from there. We have a well developed respiratory system comprising two lungs and associated air passages to perform this function.

The first step in respiration is breathing by which atmospheric air is taken in (inspiration) and the alveolar air is released out (expiration). Exchange of O_2 and CO_2 between deoxygenated blood and alveoli, transport of these gases throughout the body by blood, exchange of O_2 and CO_2 between the oxygenated blood and tissues and utilisation of O_2 by the cells (cellular respiration) are the other steps involved.

Inspiration and expiration are carried out by creating pressure gradients between the atmosphere and the alveoli with the help of specialised muscles – intercostals and diaphragm. Volumes of air involved in these activities can be estimated with the help of spirometer and are of clinical significance.

Exchange of O_2 and CO_2 at the alveoli and tissues occur by diffusion. Rate of diffusion is dependent on the partial pressure gradients of O_2 (pO_2) and CO_2 (pCO_2), their solubility as well as the thickness of the diffusion surface. These factors in our body facilitate diffusion of O_2 from the alveoli to the deoxygenated blood as well as from the oxygenated blood to the tissues. The factors are favourable for the diffusion of CO_2 in the opposite direction, i.e., from tissues to alveoli.

Oxygen is transported mainly as oxyhaemoglobin. In the alveoli where pO_2 is higher, O_2 gets bound to haemoglobin which is easily dissociated at the tissues where pO_2 is low and pCO_2 and H^+ concentration are high. Nearly 70 per cent of carbon dioxide is transported as bicarbonate (HCO_3^-) with the help of the enzyme carbonic anhydrase. 20-25 per cent of carbon dioxide is carried by haemoglobin as carbamino-haemoglobin. In the tissues where pCO_2 is high, it gets bound to blood whereas in the alveoli where pCO_2 is low and pO_2 is high, it gets removed from the blood.

Respiratory rhythm is maintained by the respiratory centre in the medulla region of brain. A pneumotaxic centre in the pons region of the brain and a chemosensitive area in the medulla can alter respiratory mechanism.

EXERCISES

1. Define vital capacity. What is its significance?
2. State the volume of air remaining in the lungs after a normal breathing.
3. Diffusion of gases occurs in the alveolar region only and not in the other parts of respiratory system. Why?
4. What are the major transport mechanisms for CO_2? Explain.
5. What will be the pO_2 and pCO_2 in the atmospheric air compared to those in the alveolar air ?
    (i) pO_2 lesser, pCO_2 higher
    (ii) pO_2 higher, pCO_2 lesser
    (iii) pO_2 higher, pCO_2 higher
    (iv) pO_2 lesser, pCO_2 lesser
6. Explain the process of inspiration under normal conditions.
7. How is respiration regulated?
8. What is the effect of pCO_2 on oxygen transport?
9. What happens to the respiratory process in a man going up a hill?
10. What is the site of gaseous exchange in an insect?
11. Define oxygen dissociation curve. Can you suggest any reason for its sigmoidal pattern?
12. Have you heard about hypoxia? Try to gather information about it, and discuss with your friends.
13. Distinguish between
    (a) IRV and ERV
    (b) Inspiratory capacity and Expiratory capacity.
    (c) Vital capacity and Total lung capacity.
14. What is Tidal volume? Find out the Tidal volume (approximate value) for a healthy human in an hour.

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CHAPTER 15

BODY FLUIDS AND CIRCULATION

15.1 Blood

15.2 Lymph (Tissue Fluid)

15.3 Circulatory Pathways

15.4 Double Circulation

15.5 Regulation of Cardiac Activity

15.6 Disorders of Circulatory System

You have learnt that all living cells have to be provided with nutrients, O_2 and other essential substances. Also, the waste or harmful substances produced, have to be removed continuously for healthy functioning of tissues. It is therefore, essential to have efficient mechanisms for the movement of these substances to the cells and from the cells. Different groups of animals have evolved different methods for this transport. Simple organisms like sponges and coelenterates circulate water from their surroundings through their body cavities to facilitate the cells to exchange these substances. More complex organisms use special fluids within their bodies to transport such materials. **Blood** is the most commonly used body fluid by most of the higher organisms, including humans, for this purpose. Another body fluid, **lymph,** also helps in the transport of certain substances. In this chapter, you will learn about the composition and properties of blood and lymph (tissue fluid) and the mechanism of circulation of blood is also explained herein.

15.1 BLOOD

Blood is a special connective tissue consisting of a fluid matrix, plasma, and formed elements.

15.1.1 Plasma

Plasma is a straw coloured, viscous fluid constituting nearly 55 per cent of the blood. 90-92 per cent of plasma is water and proteins contribute 6-8 per cent of it. Fibrinogen, globulins and albumins are the major proteins.

Fibrinogens are needed for clotting or coagulation of blood. Globulins primarly are involved in defense mechanisms of the body and the albumins help in osmotic balance. Plasma also contains small amounts of minerals like Na^+, Ca^{++}, Mg^{++}, HCO_3^-, Cl^-, etc. Glucose, amino acids, lipids, etc., are also present in the plasma as they are always in transit in the body. Factors for coagulation or clotting of blood are also present in the plasma in an inactive form. Plasma without the clotting factors is called serum.

15.1.2 Formed Elements

Erythrocytes, leucocytes and platelets are collectively called formed elements (Figure 15.1) and they constitute nearly 45 per cent of the blood.

Erythrocytes or red blood cells (RBC) are the most abundant of all the cells in blood. A healthy adult man has, on an average, 5 millions to 5.5 millions of RBCs mm^{-3} of blood. RBCs are formed in the red bone marrow in the adults. RBCs are devoid of nucleus in most of the mammals and are biconcave in shape. They have a red coloured, iron containing complex protein called haemoglobin, hence the colour and name of these cells. A healthy individual has 12-16 gms of haemoglobin in every 100 ml of blood. These molecules play a significant role in transport of respiratory gases. RBCs have an average life span of 120 days after which they are destroyed in the spleen (graveyard of RBCs).

Leucocytes are also known as white blood cells (WBC) as they are colourless due to the lack of haemoglobin. They are nucleated and are relatively lesser in number which averages 6000-8000 mm^{-3} of blood. Leucocytes are generally short lived. We have two main categories of WBCs – granulocytes and agranulocytes. Neutrophils, eosinophils and basophils are different types of granulocytes, while lymphocytes and monocytes are the agranulocytes. Neutrophils are the most abundant cells (60-65 per cent) of the total WBCs and basophils are the least (0.5-1 per cent) among them. Neutrophils and monocytes (6-8 per cent) are phagocytic cells which destroy foreign organisms entering the body. Basophils secrete histamine, serotonin, heparin, etc., and are involved in inflammatory reactions. Eosinophils (2-3 per cent) resist infections and are also

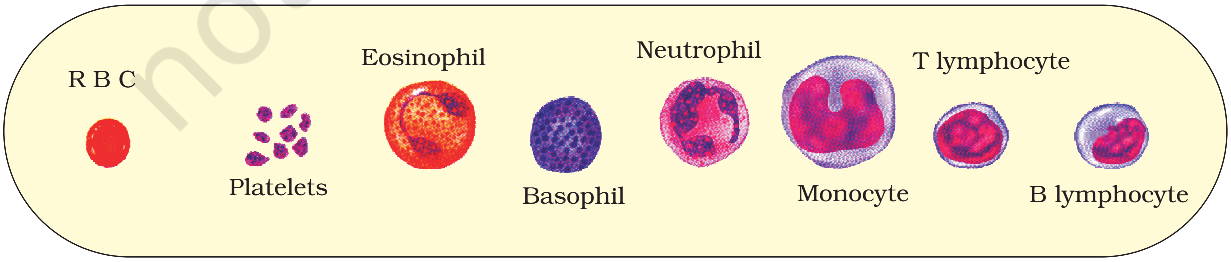

Figure 15.1 Diagrammatic representation of formed elements in blood

associated with allergic reactions. Lymphocytes (20-25 per cent) are of two major types – 'B' and 'T' forms. Both B and T lymphocytes are responsible for immune responses of the body.

Platelets also called **thrombocytes**, are cell fragments produced from megakaryocytes (special cells in the bone marrow). Blood normally contains 1,500,00-3,500,00 platelets mm^{-3}. Platelets can release a variety of substances most of which are involved in the coagulation or clotting of blood. A reduction in their number can lead to clotting disorders which will lead to excessive loss of blood from the body.

15.1.3 Blood Groups

As you know, blood of human beings differ in certain aspects though it appears to be similar. Various types of grouping of blood has been done. Two such groupings – the ABO and Rh – are widely used all over the world.

15.1.3.1 ABO grouping

ABO grouping is based on the presence or absence of two surface antigens (chemicals that can induce immune response) on the RBCs namely A and B. Similarly, the plasma of different individuals contain two natural antibodies (proteins produced in response to antigens). The distribution of antigens and antibodies in the four groups of blood, **A, B, AB** and **O** are given in Table 15.1. You probably know that during blood transfusion, any blood cannot be used; the blood of a donor has to be carefully matched with the blood of a recipient before any blood transfusion to avoid severe problems of clumping (destruction of RBC). The donor's compatibility is also shown in the Table 15.1.

TABLE 15.1 Blood Groups and Donor Compatibility

Blood Group	Antigens on RBCs	Antibodies in Plasma	Donor's Group
A	A	anti-B	A, O
B	B	anti-A	B, O
AB	A, B	nil	AB, A, B, O
O	nil	anti-A, B	O

From the above mentioned table it is evident that group 'O' blood can be donated to persons with any other blood group and hence 'O' group individuals are called 'universal donors'. Persons with 'AB' group can accept blood from persons with AB as well as the other groups of blood. Therefore, such persons are called 'universal recipients'.

15.1.3.2 Rh grouping

Another antigen, the Rh antigen similar to one present in Rhesus monkeys (hence Rh), is also observed on the surface of RBCs of majority (nearly 80 per cent) of humans. Such individuals are called **Rh positive** (Rh+ve) and those in whom this antigen is absent are called **Rh negative** (Rh-ve). An Rh-ve person, if exposed to Rh+ve blood, will form specific antibodies against the Rh antigens. Therefore, Rh group should also be matched before transfusions. A special case of Rh incompatibility (mismatching) has been observed between the Rh-ve blood of a pregnant mother with Rh+ve blood of the foetus. Rh antigens of the foetus do not get exposed to the Rh-ve blood of the mother in the first pregnancy as the two bloods are well separated by the placenta. However, during the delivery of the first child, there is a possibility of exposure of the maternal blood to small amounts of the Rh+ve blood from the foetus. In such cases, the mother starts preparing antibodies against Rh antigen in her blood. In case of her subsequent pregnancies, the Rh antibodies from the mother (Rh-ve) can leak into the blood of the foetus (Rh+ve) and destroy the foetal RBCs. This could be fatal to the foetus or could cause severe anaemia and jaundice to the baby. This condition is called *erythroblastosis foetalis*. This can be avoided by administering anti-Rh antibodies to the mother immediately after the delivery of the first child.

15.1.4 Coagulation of Blood

You know that when you cut your finger or hurt yourself, your wound does not continue to bleed for a long time; usually the blood stops flowing after sometime. *Do you know why?* Blood exhibits coagulation or clotting in response to an injury or trauma. This is a mechanism to prevent excessive loss of blood from the body. You would have observed a dark reddish brown scum formed at the site of a cut or an injury over a period of time. It is a clot or coagulam formed mainly of a network of threads called fibrins in which dead and damaged formed elements of blood are trapped. Fibrins are formed by the conversion of inactive fibrinogens in the plasma by the enzyme thrombin. Thrombins, in turn are formed from another inactive substance present in the plasma called prothrombin. An enzyme complex, thrombokinase, is required for the above reaction. This complex is formed by a series of linked enzymic reactions (cascade process) involving a number of factors present in the plasma in an inactive state. An injury or a trauma stimulates the platelets in the blood to release certain factors which activate the mechanism of coagulation. Certain factors released by the tissues at the site of injury also can initiate coagulation. Calcium ions play a very important role in clotting.

15.2 LYMPH (TISSUE FLUID)

As the blood passes through the capillaries in tissues, some water along with many small water soluble substances move out into the spaces between the cells of tissues leaving the larger proteins and most of the formed elements in the blood vessels. This fluid released out is called the interstitial fluid or tissue fluid. It has the same mineral distribution as that in plasma. Exchange of nutrients, gases, etc., between the blood and the cells always occur through this fluid. An elaborate network of vessels called the lymphatic system collects this fluid and drains it back to the major veins. The fluid present in the lymphatic system is called the lymph. Lymph is a colourless fluid containing specialised lymphocytes which are responsible for the immune responses of the body. Lymph is also an important carrier for nutrients, hormones, etc. Fats are absorbed through lymph in the lacteals present in the intestinal villi.

15.3 CIRCULATORY PATHWAYS

The circulatory patterns are of two types – open or closed. **Open circulatory system** is present in arthropods and molluscs in which blood pumped by the heart passes through large vessels into open spaces or body cavities called sinuses. Annelids and chordates have a **closed circulatory system** in which the blood pumped by the heart is always circulated through a closed network of blood vessels. This pattern is considered to be more advantageous as the flow of fluid can be more precisely regulated.

All vertebrates possess a muscular chambered heart. Fishes have a 2-chambered heart with an atrium and a ventricle. Amphibians and the reptiles (except crocodiles) have a 3-chambered heart with two atria and a single ventricle, whereas crocodiles, birds and mammals possess a 4-chambered heart with two atria and two ventricles. In fishes the heart pumps out deoxygenated blood which is oxygenated by the gills and supplied to the body parts from where deoxygenated blood is returned to the heart (single circulation). In amphibians and reptiles, the left atrium receives oxygenated blood from the gills/lungs/skin and the right atrium gets the deoxygenated blood from other body parts. However, they get mixed up in the single ventricle which pumps out mixed blood (incomplete double circulation). In birds and mammals, oxygenated and deoxygenated blood received by the left and right atria respectively passes on to the ventricles of the same sides. The ventricles pump it out without any mixing up, i.e., two separate circulatory pathways are present in these organisms, hence, these animals have double circulation. Let us study the human circulatory system.

15.3.1 Human Circulatory System

Human circulatory system, also called the blood vascular system consists of a muscular chambered heart, a network of closed branching blood vessels and blood, the fluid which is circulated.

Heart, the mesodermally derived organ, is situated in the thoracic cavity, in between the two lungs, slightly tilted to the left. It has the size of a clenched fist. It is protected by a double walled membranous bag, **pericardium,** enclosing the pericardial fluid. Our heart has four chambers, two relatively small upper chambers called **atria** and two larger lower chambers called **ventricles**. A thin, muscular wall called the inter-atrial septum separates the right and the left atria, whereas a thick-walled, the inter-ventricular septum, separates the left and the right ventricles (Figure 15.2). The atrium and the ventricle of the same side are also separated by a thick fibrous tissue called the atrio-ventricular septum. However, each of these septa are provided with an opening through which the two chambers of the same side are connected. The opening between the right atrium and the right ventricle is guarded by a valve formed of three muscular flaps or cusps, the tricuspid valve, whereas a bicuspid or mitral valve guards the opening between the left atrium and the left ventricle. The openings of the right and the left ventricles into the

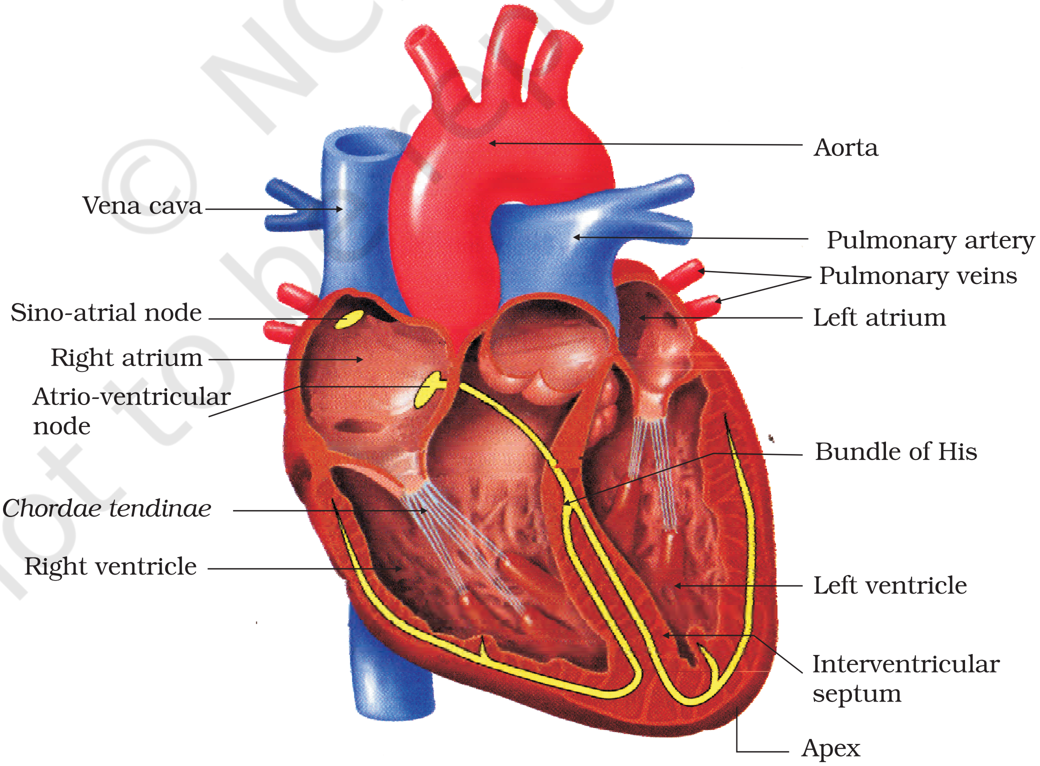
Aorta
Vena cava
Pulmonary artery
Pulmonary veins
Sino-atrial node
Left atrium
Right atrium
Atrio-ventricular node
Bundle of His
Chordae tendinae
Right ventricle
Left ventricle
Interventricular septum
Apex

Figure 15.2 Section of a human heart

pulmonary artery and the aorta respectively are provided with the semilunar valves. The valves in the heart allows the flow of blood only in one direction, i.e., from the atria to the ventricles and from the ventricles to the pulmonary artery or aorta. These valves prevent any backward flow.

The entire heart is made of cardiac muscles. The walls of ventricles are much thicker than that of the atria. A specialised cardiac musculature called the nodal tissue is also distributed in the heart (Figure 15.2). A patch of this tissue is present in the right upper corner of the right atrium called the **sino-atrial node** (SAN). Another mass of this tissue is seen in the lower left corner of the right atrium close to the atrio-ventricular septum called the **atrio-ventricular node** (AVN). A bundle of nodal fibres, atrio-ventricular bundle (AV bundle) continues from the AVN which passes through the atrio-ventricular septa to emerge on the top of the inter-ventricular septum and immediately divides into a right and left bundle. These branches give rise to minute fibres throughout the ventricular musculature of the respective sides and are called purkinje fibres. The nodal musculature has the ability to generate action potentials without any external stimuli, i.e., it is autoexcitable. However, the number of action potentials that could be generated in a minute vary at different parts of the nodal system. The SAN can generate the maximum number of action potentials, i.e., 70-75 min^{-1}, and is responsible for initiating and maintaining the rhythmic contractile activity of the heart. Therefore, it is called the pacemaker. Our heart normally beats 70-75 times in a minute (average 72 beats min^{-1}).

15.3.2 Cardiac Cycle

How does the heart function? Let us take a look. To begin with, all the four chambers of heart are in a relaxed state, i.e., they are in joint diastole. As the tricuspid and bicuspid valves are open, blood from the pulmonary veins and vena cava flows into the left and the right ventricle respectively through the left and right atria. The semilunar valves are closed at this stage. The SAN now generates an action potential which stimulates both the atria to undergo a simultaneous contraction – the atrial systole. This increases the flow of blood into the ventricles by about 30 per cent. The action potential is conducted to the ventricular side by the AVN and AV bundle from where the bundle of His transmits it through the entire ventricular musculature. This causes the ventricular muscles to contract, (ventricular systole), the atria undergoes relaxation (diastole), coinciding with the ventricular systole. Ventricular systole increases the ventricular pressure causing the closure of tricuspid and bicuspid valves due to attempted backflow of blood into the atria. As the ventricular pressure increases further, the semilunar valves guarding the pulmonary artery (right side) and the aorta (left side) are forced open, allowing the blood in the ventricles to flow through these vessels into the circulatory pathways. The ventricles now relax (ventricular diastole) and the ventricular pressure falls causing the closure of semilunar valves which prevents the backflow of blood into the ventricles. As the ventricular pressure declines further, the tricuspid and bicuspid valves are pushed open by the pressure in the atria exerted by the blood which was being emptied into them by the veins. The blood now once again moves freely to the ventricles. The ventricles and atria are now again in a relaxed (joint diastole) state, as earlier. Soon the SAN generates a new action potential and the events described above are repeated in that sequence and the process continues.

This sequential event in the heart which is cyclically repeated is called the cardiac cycle and it consists of systole and diastole of both the atria and ventricles. As mentioned earlier, the heart beats 72 times per minute, i.e., that many cardiac cycles are performed per minute. From this it could be deduced that the duration of a cardiac cycle is 0.8 seconds. During a cardiac cycle, each ventricle pumps out approximately 70 mL of blood which is called the stroke volume. The stroke volume multiplied by the heart rate (no. of beats per min.) gives the cardiac output. Therefore, the cardiac output can be defined as the volume of blood pumped out by each ventricle per minute and averages 5000 mL or 5 litres in a healthy individual. The body has the ability to alter the stroke volume as well as the heart rate and thereby the cardiac output. For example, the cardiac output of an athlete will be much higher than that of an ordinary man.

During each cardiac cycle two prominent sounds are produced which can be easily heard through a stethoscope. The first heart sound (lub) is associated with the closure of the tricuspid and bicuspid valves whereas the second heart sound (dub) is associated with the closure of the semilunar valves. These sounds are of clinical diagnostic significance.

15.3.3 Electrocardiogram (ECG)

You are probably familiar with this scene from a typical hospital television show: A patient is hooked up to a monitoring machine that shows voltage traces on a screen and makes the sound "... pip... pip... pip..... peeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee" as the patient goes into cardiac arrest. This type of machine (electro-cardiograph) is used to obtain an electrocardiogram (ECG). ECG is a graphical representation of the electrical activity of the heart during a cardiac cycle. To obtain a standard ECG (as shown in the

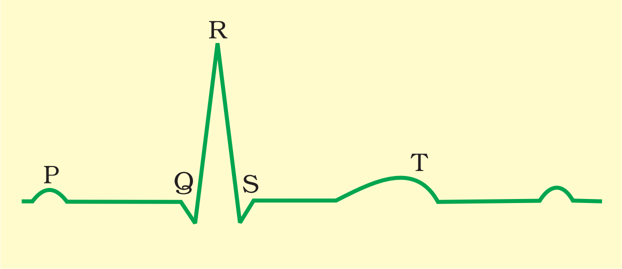

Figure 15.3 Diagrammatic presentation of a standard ECG

Figure 15.3), a patient is connected to the machine with three electrical leads (one to each wrist and to the left ankle) that continuously monitor the heart activity. For a detailed evaluation of the heart's function, multiple leads are attached to the chest region. Here, we will talk only about a standard ECG.

Each peak in the ECG is identified with a letter from P to T that corresponds to a specific electrical activity of the heart.

The P-wave represents the electrical **excitation (or depolarisation) of the atria**, which leads to the contraction of both the atria.

The QRS complex represents the **depolarisation of the ventricles**, which initiates the ventricular contraction. The contraction starts shortly after Q and marks the beginning of the systole.

The T-wave represents the return of the ventricles from excited to normal state (**repolarisation**). The end of the T-wave marks the end of systole.

Obviously, by counting the number of QRS complexes that occur in a given time period, one can determine the heart beat rate of an individual. Since the ECGs obtained from different individuals have roughly the same shape for a given lead configuration, any deviation from this shape indicates a possible abnormality or disease. Hence, it is of a great clinical significance.

15.4 DOUBLE CIRCULATION

The blood flows strictly by a fixed route through **Blood Vessels**—the arteries and veins. Basically, each artery and vein consists of three layers: an inner lining of squamous endothelium, the **tunica intima**, a middle layer of smooth muscle and elastic fibres, the **tunica media,** and an external layer of fibrous connective tissue with collagen fibres, the **tunica externa**. The tunica media is comparatively thin in the veins (Figure 15.4).

As mentioned earlier, the blood pumped by the right ventricle enters the pulmonary artery, whereas the left ventricle pumps blood into the aorta. The deoxygenated blood pumped into the pulmonary artery is passed on to the lungs from where the oxygenated blood is carried by the pulmonary veins into the left atrium. This pathway constitutes the pulmonary circulation. The oxygenated blood entering the aorta is carried by a network of arteries, arterioles and capillaries to the tissues from where the deoxygenated blood is collected by a system of venules, veins and vena cava and emptied into the right atrium. This is the systemic circulation (Figure 15.4). The systemic circulation provides nutrients, O_2 and other essential substances to the tissues and takes CO_2 and other harmful substances away for elimination. A unique vascular connection exists between the digestive tract and liver called hepatic portal system. The hepatic portal vein carries blood from intestine to the liver before it is delivered to the systemic circulation. A special coronary system of blood vessels is present in our body exclusively for the circulation of blood to and from the cardiac musculature.

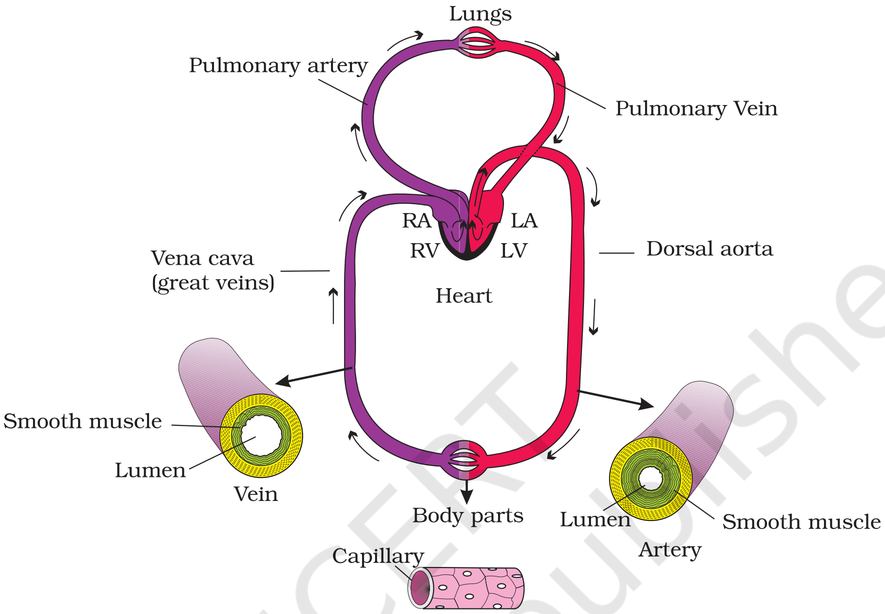
Lungs
Pulmonary artery
Pulmonary Vein
RA
LA
RV
LV
Vena cava (great veins)
Dorsal aorta
Heart
Smooth muscle
Lumen
Vein
Body parts
Lumen
Smooth muscle
Artery
Capillary

Figure 15.4 Schematic plan of blood circulation in human

15.5 REGULATION OF CARDIAC ACTIVITY

Normal activities of the heart are regulated intrinsically, i.e., auto regulated by specialised muscles (nodal tissue), hence the heart is called myogenic. A special neural centre in the medulla oblangata can moderate the cardiac function through autonomic nervous system (ANS). Neural signals through the sympathetic nerves (part of ANS) can increase the rate of heart beat, the strength of ventricular contraction and thereby the cardiac output. On the other hand, parasympathetic neural signals (another component of ANS) decrease the rate of heart beat, speed of conduction of action potential and thereby the cardiac output. Adrenal medullary hormones can also increase the cardiac output.

15.6 DISORDERS OF CIRCULATORY SYSTEM

High Blood Pressure (Hypertension): Hypertension is the term for blood pressure that is higher than normal (120/80). In this measurement 120 mm Hg (millimetres of mercury pressure) is the systolic, or pumping, pressure and 80 mm Hg is the diastolic, or resting, pressure. If repeated checks of blood pressure of an individual is 140/90 (140 over 90) or higher, it shows hypertension. High blood pressure leads to heart diseases and also affects vital organs like brain and kidney.

Coronary Artery Disease (CAD): Coronary Artery Disease, often referred to as **atherosclerosis**, affects the vessels that supply blood to the heart muscle. It is caused by deposits of calcium, fat, cholesterol and fibrous tissues, which makes the lumen of arteries narrower.

Angina: It is also called 'angina pectoris'. A symptom of acute chest pain appears when no enough oxygen is reaching the heart muscle. Angina can occur in men and women of any age but it is more common among the middle-aged and elderly. It occurs due to conditions that affect the blood flow.

Heart Failure: Heart failure means the state of heart when it is not pumping blood effectively enough to meet the needs of the body. It is sometimes called congestive heart failure because congestion of the lungs is one of the main symptoms of this disease. Heart failure is not the same as cardiac arrest (when the heart stops beating) or a heart attack (when the heart muscle is suddenly damaged by an inadequate blood supply).

SUMMARY

Vertebrates circulate blood, a fluid connective tissue, in their body, to transport essential substances to the cells and to carry waste substances from there. Another fluid, lymph (tissue fluid) is also used for the transport of certain substances.

Blood comprises of a fluid matrix, plasma and formed elements. Red blood cells (RBCs, erythrocytes), white blood cells (WBCs, leucocytes) and platelets (thrombocytes) constitute the formed elements. Blood of humans are grouped into A, B, AB and O systems based on the presence or absence of two surface antigens, A, B on the RBCs. Another blood grouping is also done based on the presence or absence of another antigen called Rhesus factor (Rh) on the surface of RBCs. The spaces between cells in the tissues contain a fluid derived from blood called tissue fluid. This fluid called lymph is almost similar to blood except for the protein content and the formed elements.

All vertebrates and a few invertebrates have a closed circulatory system. Our circulatory system consists of a muscular pumping organ, heart, a network of vessels and a fluid, blood. Heart has two atria and two ventricles. Cardiac musculature is auto-excitable. Sino-atrial node (SAN) generates the maximum number of action potentials per minute (70-75/min) and therefore, it sets the pace of the activities of the heart. Hence it is called the Pacemaker. The action potential causes the atria and then the ventricles to undergo contraction (systole) followed by their relaxation (diastole). The systole forces the blood to move from the atria to the ventricles and to the pulmonary artery and the aorta. The cardiac cycle is formed by sequential events in the heart which is cyclically repeated and is called the cardiac cycle. A healthy person shows 72 such cycles per minute. About 70 mL of blood is pumped out by each ventricle during a cardiac cycle and it is called the stroke or beat volume. Volume of blood pumped out by each ventricle of heart per minute is called the cardiac output and it is equal to the product of stroke volume and heart rate (approx 5 litres). The electrical activity of the heart can be recorded from the body surface by using electrocardiograph and the recording is called electrocardiogram (ECG) which is of clinical importance.

We have a complete double circulation, i.e., two circulatory pathways, namely, pulmonary and systemic are present. The pulmonary circulation starts by the pumping of deoxygenated blood by the right ventricle which is carried to the lungs where it is oxygenated and returned to the left atrium. The systemic circulation starts with the pumping of oxygenated blood by the left ventricle to the aorta which is carried to all the body tissues and the deoxygenated blood from there is collected by the veins and returned to the right atrium. Though the heart is autoexcitable, its functions can be moderated by neural and hormonal mechanisms.

EXERCISES

1. Name the components of the formed elements in the blood and mention one major function of each of them.
2. What is the importance of plasma proteins?
3. Match Column I with Column II :

Column I	**Column II**
(a) Eosinophils	(i) Coagulation
(b) RBC	(ii) Universal Recipient
(c) AB Group	(iii) Resist Infections
(d) Platelets	(iv) Contraction of Heart
(e) Systole	(v) Gas transport

4. Why do we consider blood as a connective tissue?
5. What is the difference between lymph and blood?
6. What is meant by double circulation? What is its significance?
7. Write the differences between :
   (a) Blood and Lymph
   (b) Open and Closed system of circulation
   (c) Systole and Diastole
   (d) P-wave and T-wave
8. Describe the evolutionary change in the pattern of heart among the vertebrates.
9. Why do we call our heart myogenic?
10. Sino-atrial node is called the pacemaker of our heart. Why?
11. What is the significance of atrio-ventricular node and atrio-ventricular bundle in the functioning of heart?
12. Define a cardiac cycle and the cardiac output.
13. Explain heart sounds.
14. Draw a standard ECG and explain the different segments in it.

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CHAPTER 16

EXCRETORY PRODUCTS AND THEIR ELIMINATION

16.1 Human Excretory System

16.2 Urine Formation

16.3 Function of the Tubules

16.4 Mechanism of Concentration of the Filtrate

16.5 Regulation of Kidney Function

16.6 Micturition

16.7 Role of other Organs in Excretion

16.8 Disorders of the Excretory System

Animals accumulate ammonia, urea, uric acid, carbon dioxide, water and ions like Na^+, K^+, Cl^-, phosphate, sulphate, etc., either by metabolic activities or by other means like excess ingestion. These substances have to be removed totally or partially. In this chapter, you will learn the mechanisms of elimination of these substances with special emphasis on common nitrogenous wastes. Ammonia, urea and uric acid are the major forms of nitrogenous wastes excreted by the animals. Ammonia is the most toxic form and requires large amount of water for its elimination, whereas uric acid, being the least toxic, can be removed with a minimum loss of water.

The process of excreting ammonia is *Ammonotelism*. Many bony fishes, aquatic amphibians and aquatic insects are ***ammonotelic*** in nature. Ammonia, as it is readily soluble, is generally excreted by diffusion across body surfaces or through gill surfaces (in fish) as ammonium ions. Kidneys do not play any significant role in its removal. Terrestrial adaptation necessitated the production of lesser toxic nitrogenous wastes like urea and uric acid for conservation of water. Mammals, many terrestrial amphibians and marine fishes mainly excrete urea and are called ***ureotelic*** animals. Ammonia produced by metabolism is converted into urea in the liver of these animals and released into the blood which is filtered and excreted out by the kidneys. Some amount of urea may be retained in the kidney matrix of some of these animals to maintain a desired osmolarity. Reptiles, birds, land snails and insects excrete nitrogenous wastes as uric acid in the form of pellet or paste with a minimum loss of water and are called ***uricotelic*** animals.

A survey of animal kingdom presents a variety of excretory structures. In most of the invertebrates, these structures are simple tubular forms whereas vertebrates have complex tubular organs called kidneys. Some of these structures are mentioned here. Protonephridia or flame cells are the excretory structures in Platyhelminthes (Flatworms, e.g., *Planaria*), rotifers, some annelids and the cephalochordate – *Amphioxus*. Protonephridia are primarily concerned with ionic and fluid volume regulation, i.e., osmoregulation. Nephridia are the tubular excretory structures of earthworms and other annelids. Nephridia help to remove nitrogenous wastes and maintain a fluid and ionic balance. Malpighian tubules are the excretory structures of most of the insects including cockroaches. Malpighian tubules help in the removal of nitrogenous wastes and osmoregulation. Antennal glands or green glands perform the excretory function in crustaceans like prawns.

16.1 HUMAN EXCRETORY SYSTEM

In humans, the excretory system consists of a pair of kidneys, one pair of ureters, a urinary bladder and a urethra (Figure 16.1). Kidneys are reddish brown, bean shaped structures situated between the levels of last thoracic and third lumbar vertebra close to the dorsal inner wall of the abdominal cavity. Each kidney of an adult human measures 10-12 cm in length, 5-7 cm in width, 2-3 cm in thickness with an average weight of 120-170 g. Towards the centre of the inner concave surface of the kidney is a notch called hilum through which ureter, blood vessels and nerves enter. Inner to the hilum is a broad funnel shaped space called the renal pelvis with projections called calyces. The outer layer of kidney is a tough capsule. Inside the kidney, there are two zones, an outer *cortex* and an inner *medulla*. The medulla is divided into a few conical masses (medullary pyramids) projecting into the calyces (sing.: calyx). The cortex extends in between the

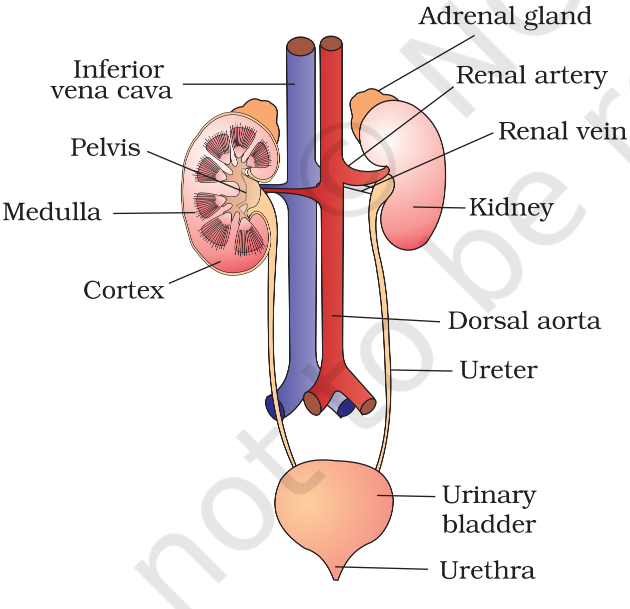

Figure 16.1 Human Urinary system

medullary pyramids as renal columns called **Columns of Bertini** (Figure 16.2).

Each kidney has nearly one million complex tubular structures called **nephrons** (Figure 16.3), which are the functional units. Each nephron has two parts – the glomerulus and the renal tubule. Glomerulus is a tuft of capillaries formed by the afferent arteriole – a fine branch of renal artery. Blood from the glomerulus is carried away by an efferent arteriole.

The renal tubule begins with a double walled cup-like structure called **Bowman's capsule**, which encloses the glomerulus. Glomerulus alongwith Bowman's capsule, is called the malpighian body or renal corpuscle (Figure 16.4). The tubule continues further to form a highly coiled network – **proximal convoluted tubule**

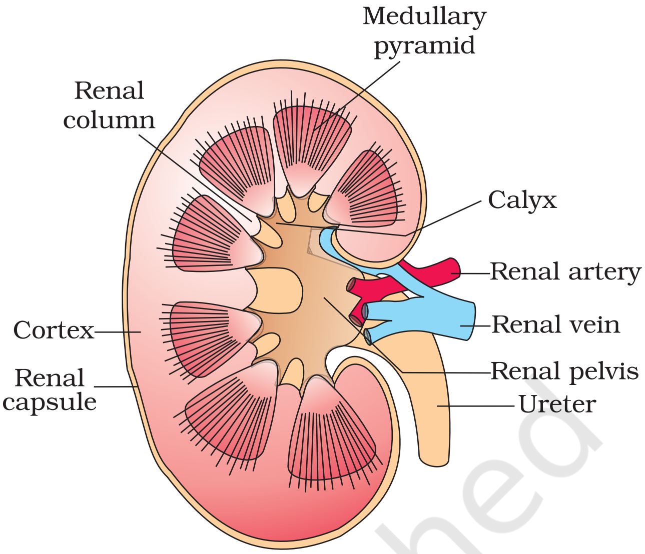
Medullary pyramid
Renal column
Calyx
Renal artery
Renal vein
Cortex
Renal pelvis
Renal capsule
Ureter

Figure 16.2 Longitudinal section (Diagrammatic) of Kidney

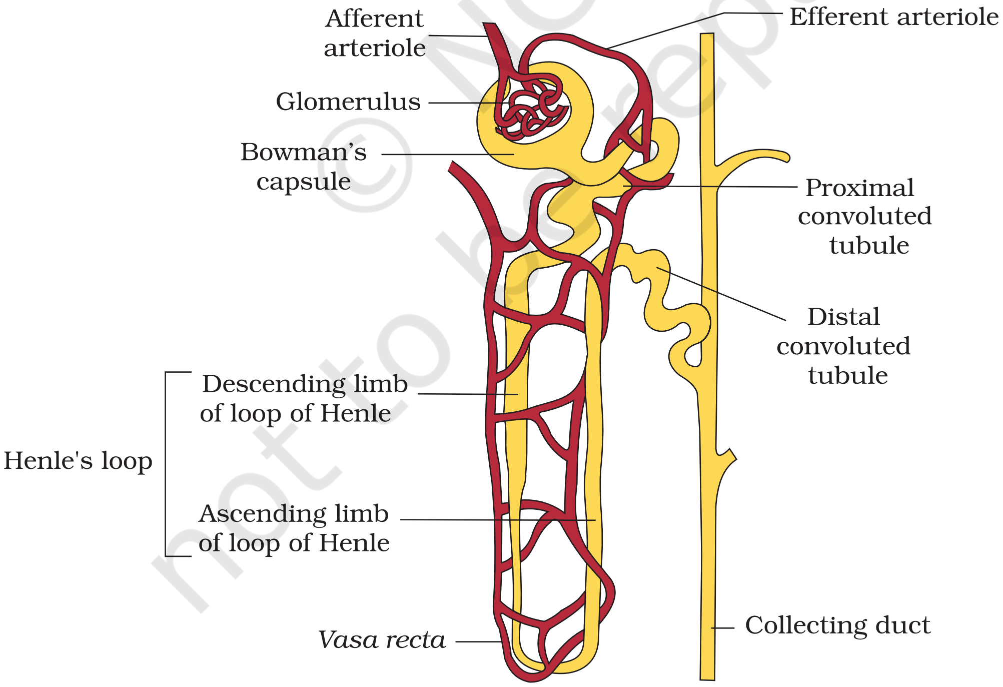
Afferent arteriole
Efferent arteriole
Glomerulus
Bowman's capsule
Proximal convoluted tubule
Distal convoluted tubule
Descending limb of loop of Henle
Henle's loop
Ascending limb of loop of Henle
Vasa recta
Collecting duct

Figure 16.3 A diagrammatic representation of a nephron showing blood vessels, duct and tubule

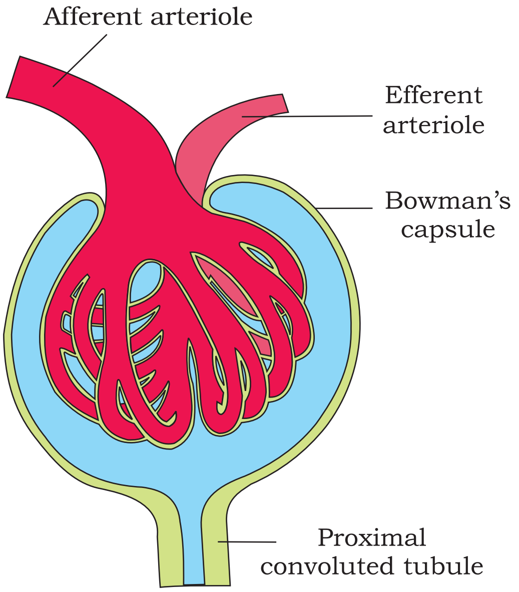

Figure 16.4 Malpighian body (renal corpuscle)

(PCT). A hairpin shaped **Henle's loop** is the next part of the tubule which has a descending and an ascending limb. The ascending limb continues as another highly coiled tubular region called **distal convoluted tubule** (DCT). The DCTs of many nephrons open into a straight tube called *collecting duct*, many of which converge and open into the renal pelvis through medullary pyramids in the calyces.

The Malpighian corpuscle, PCT and DCT of the nephron are situated in the cortical region of the kidney whereas the loop of Henle dips into the medulla. In majority of nephrons, the loop of Henle is too short and extends only very little into the medulla. Such nephrons are called cortical nephrons. In some of the nephrons, the loop of Henle is very long and runs deep into the medulla. These nephrons are called juxta medullary nephrons.

The efferent arteriole emerging from the glomerulus forms a fine capillary network around the renal tubule called the peritubular capillaries. A minute vessel of this network runs parallel to the Henle's loop forming a 'U' shaped *vasa recta*. *Vasa recta* is absent or highly reduced in cortical nephrons.

16.2 URINE FORMATION

Urine formation involves three main processes namely, glomerular filtration, reabsorption and secretion, that takes place in different parts of the nephron.

The first step in urine formation is the filtration of blood, which is carried out by the glomerulus and is called **glomerular filtration**. On an average, 1100-1200 ml of blood is filtered by the kidneys per minute which constitute roughly 1/5th of the blood pumped out by each ventricle of the heart in a minute. The glomerular capillary blood pressure causes filtration of blood through 3 layers, i.e., the endothelium of glomerular blood vessels, the epithelium of Bowman's capsule and a basement membrane between these two layers. The epithelial cells of Bowman's capsule called podocytes are arranged in an intricate manner so as to leave some minute spaces called filtration slits or slit pores. Blood is filtered so finely through these membranes, that almost all the constituents of the plasma except the proteins pass onto the lumen of the Bowman's capsule. Therefore, it is considered as a process of **ultra filtration.**

The amount of the filtrate formed by the kidneys per minute is called **glomerular filtration rate** (GFR). GFR in a healthy individual is approximately 125 ml/minute, i.e., 180 litres per day !

The kidneys have built-in mechanisms for the regulation of glomerular filtration rate. One such efficient mechanism is carried out by juxta glomerular apparatus (JGA). JGA is a special sensitive region formed by cellular modifications in the distal convoluted tubule and the afferent arteriole at the location of their contact. A fall in GFR can activate the JG cells to release renin which can stimulate the glomerular blood flow and thereby the GFR back to normal.

A comparison of the volume of the filtrate formed per day (180 litres per day) with that of the urine released (1.5 litres), suggest that nearly 99 per cent of the filtrate has to be reabsorbed by the renal tubules. This process is called **reabsorption**. The tubular epithelial cells in different segments of nephron perform this either by active or passive mechanisms. For example, substances like glucose, amino acids, Na^+, etc., in the filtrate are reabsorbed actively whereas the nitrogenous wastes are absorbed by passive transport. Reabsorption of water also occurs passively in the initial segments of the nephron (Figure 16.5).

During urine formation, the tubular cells secrete substances like H^+, K^+ and ammonia into the filtrate. Tubular secretion is also an important step in urine formation as it helps in the maintenance of ionic and acid base balance of body fluids.

16.3 FUNCTION OF THE TUBULES

Proximal Convoluted Tubule (PCT): PCT is lined by simple cuboidal brush border epithelium which increases the surface area for reabsorption. Nearly all of the essential nutrients, and 70-80 per cent of electrolytes and water are reabsorbed by this segment. PCT also helps to maintain the pH and ionic balance of the body fluids by selective secretion of hydrogen ions and ammonia into the filtrate and by absorption of HCO_3^- from it.

Henle's Loop: Reabsorption is minimum in its ascending limb. However, this region plays a significant role in the maintenance of high osmolarity of medullary interstitial fluid. The descending limb of loop of Henle is permeable to water but almost impermeable to electrolytes. This concentrates the filtrate as it moves down. The ascending limb is impermeable to water but allows transport of electrolytes actively or passively. Therefore, as the concentrated filtrate pass upward, it gets diluted due to the passage of electrolytes to the medullary fluid.

Distal Convoluted Tubule (DCT): Conditional reabsorption of Na^+ and water takes place in this segment. DCT is also capable of reabsorption of HCO_3^- and selective secretion of hydrogen and potassium ions and NH_3 to maintain the pH and sodium-potassium balance in blood.

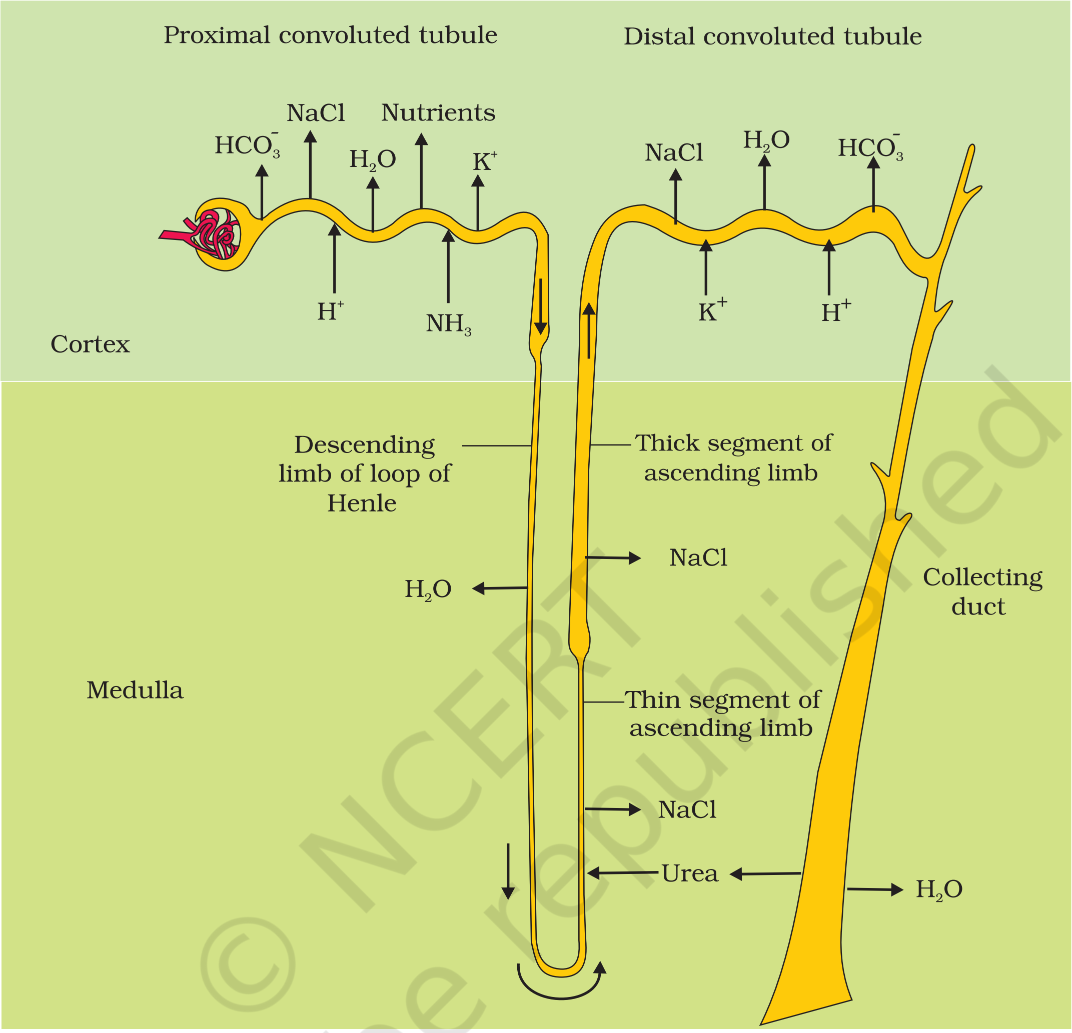
Proximal convoluted tubule
Distal convoluted tubule
NaCl
Nutrients
HCO_3^-
H_2O
K^+
H^+
NH_3
NaCl
H_2O
HCO_3^-
K^+
H^+
Cortex
Descending limb of loop of Henle
Thick segment of ascending limb
NaCl
H_2O
Collecting duct
Medulla
Thin segment of ascending limb
NaCl
Urea
H_2O

Figure 16.5 Reabsorption and secretion of major substances at different parts of the nephron (Arrows indicate direction of movement of materials.)

Collecting Duct: This long duct extends from the cortex of the kidney to the inner parts of the medulla. Large amounts of water could be reabsorbed from this region to produce a concentrated urine. This segment allows passage of small amounts of urea into the medullary interstitium to keep up the osmolarity. It also plays a role in the maintenance of pH and ionic balance of blood by the selective secretion of H^+ and K^+ ions (Figure 16.5).

16.4 MECHANISM OF CONCENTRATION OF THE FILTRATE

Mammals have the ability to produce a concentrated urine. The Henle's loop and *vasa recta* play a significant role in this. The flow of filtrate in the two limbs of Henle's loop is in opposite directions and thus forms a counter current. The flow of blood through the two limbs of *vasa recta* is also in a counter current pattern. The proximity between the Henle's loop and *vasa recta*, as well as the counter current in them help in maintaining an increasing osmolarity towards the inner medullary interstitium, i.e., from 300 mOsmolL^{-1} in the cortex to about 1200 mOsmolL^{-1} in the inner medulla. This gradient is mainly caused by NaCl and urea. NaCl is transported by the ascending limb of Henle's loop which is exchanged with the descending limb of *vasa recta*. NaCl is returned to the interstitium by the ascending portion of *vasa recta*. Similarly, small amounts of urea enter the thin segment of the ascending limb of Henle's loop which is transported back to the interstitium by the collecting tubule. The above described transport of substances facilitated by the special arrangement of Henle's loop and *vasa recta* is called the **counter current mechanism** (Figure. 16.6). This mechanism helps to maintain a concentration gradient

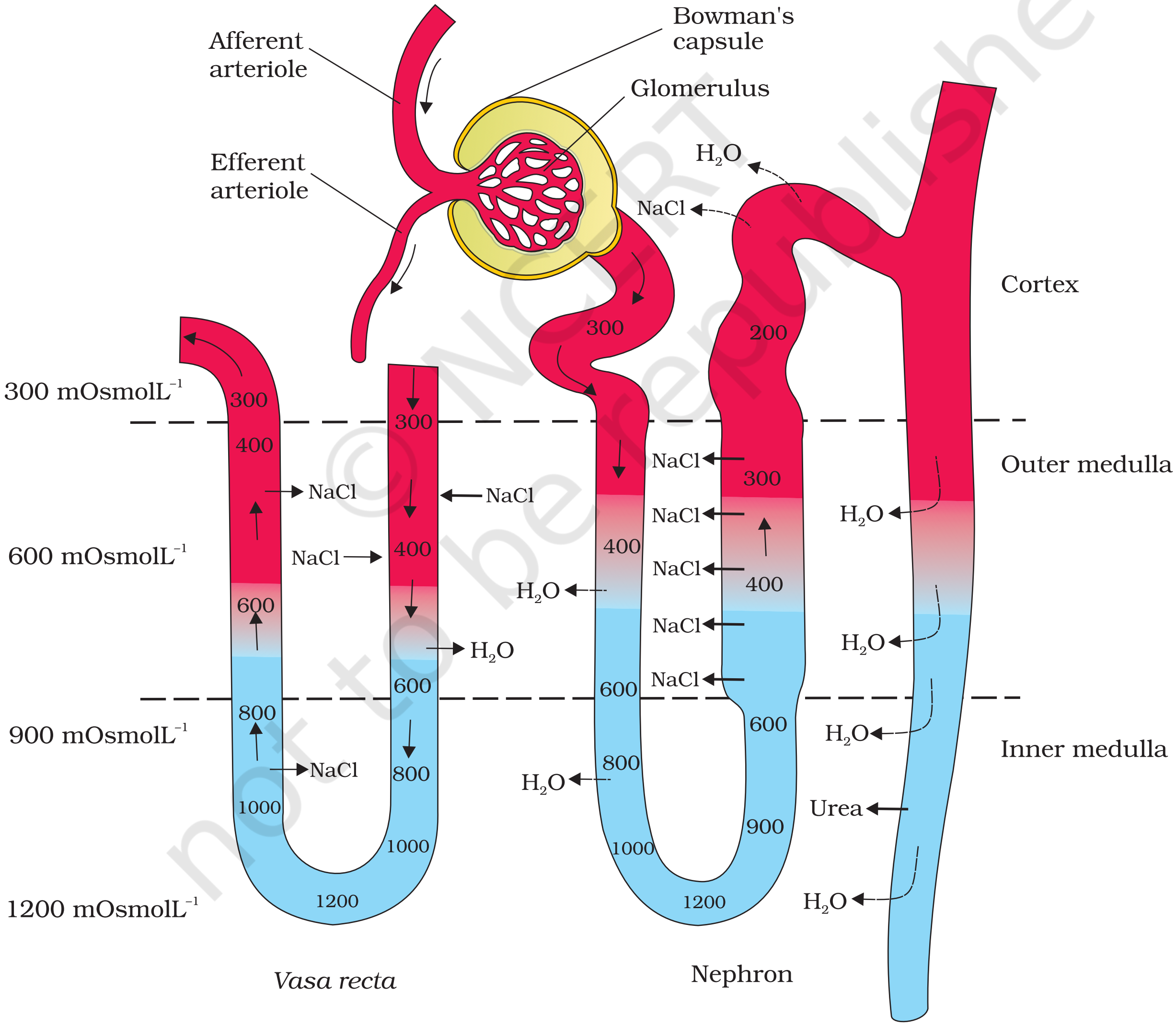
Afferent arteriole
Bowman's capsule
Glomerulus
Efferent arteriole
H$_2$O
NaCl
Cortex
300 mOsmolL^{-1}
300
400
300
NaCl
NaCl
400
600 mOsmolL^{-1}
600
600
H$_2$O
800
900 mOsmolL^{-1}
NaCl
800
1000
1000
1200
1200 mOsmolL^{-1}
Vasa recta
300
200
NaCl
300
NaCl
400
H$_2$O
NaCl
400
NaCl
600
NaCl
600
800
H$_2$O
900
1000
1200
Nephron
Outer medulla
H$_2$O
H$_2$O
Inner medulla
H$_2$O
Urea
H$_2$O

Figure 16.6 Diagrammatic representation of a nephron and *vasa recta* showing counter current mechanisms

in the medullary interstitium. Presence of such interstitial gradient helps in an easy passage of water from the collecting tubule thereby concentrating the filtrate (urine). Human kidneys can produce urine nearly four times concentrated than the initial filtrate formed.

16.5 REGULATION OF KIDNEY FUNCTION

The functioning of the kidneys is efficiently monitored and regulated by hormonal feedback mechanisms involving the hypothalamus, JGA and to a certain extent, the heart.

Osmoreceptors in the body are activated by changes in blood volume, body fluid volume and ionic concentration. An excessive loss of fluid from the body can activate these receptors which stimulate the hypothalamus to release antidiuretic hormone (ADH) or vasopressin from the neurohypophysis. ADH facilitates water reabsorption from latter parts of the tubule, thereby preventing diuresis. An increase in body fluid volume can switch off the osmoreceptors and suppress the ADH release to complete the feedback. ADH can also affect the kidney function by its constrictory effects on blood vessels. This causes an increase in blood pressure. An increase in blood pressure can increase the glomerular blood flow and thereby the GFR.

The JGA plays a complex regulatory role. A fall in glomerular blood flow/glomerular blood pressure/GFR can activate the JG cells to release **renin** which converts angiotensinogen in blood to angiotensin I and further to angiotensin II. Angiotensin II, being a powerful vasoconstrictor, increases the glomerular blood pressure and thereby GFR. Angiotensin II also activates the adrenal cortex to release Aldosterone. Aldosterone causes reabsorption of Na^+ and water from the distal parts of the tubule. This also leads to an increase in blood pressure and GFR. This complex mechanism is generally known as the **Renin-Angiotensin** mechanism.

An increase in blood flow to the atria of the heart can cause the release of **Atrial Natriuretic Factor** (ANF). ANF can cause vasodilation (dilation of blood vessels) and thereby decrease the blood pressure. ANF mechanism, therefore, acts as a check on the renin-angiotensin mechanism.

16.6 MICTURITION

Urine formed by the nephrons is ultimately carried to the urinary bladder where it is stored till a voluntary signal is given by the central nervous system (CNS). This signal is initiated by the stretching of the urinary bladder as it gets filled with urine. In response, the stretch receptors on the walls of the bladder send signals to the CNS. The CNS passes on motor messages to initiate the contraction of smooth muscles of the bladder and simultaneous relaxation of the urethral sphincter causing the release of urine. The process of release of urine is called micturition and the neural mechanisms causing it is called the micturition reflex. An adult human excretes, on an average, 1 to 1.5 litres of urine per day. The urine formed is a light yellow coloured watery fluid which is slightly acidic (pH-6.0) and has a characterestic odour. On an average, 25-30 gm of urea is excreted out per day. Various conditions can affect the characteristics of urine. Analysis of urine helps in clinical diagnosis of many metabolic discorders as well as malfunctioning of the kidney. For example, presence of glucose (Glycosuria) and ketone bodies (Ketonuria) in urine are indicative of diabetes mellitus.

16.7 ROLE OF OTHER ORGANS IN EXCRETION

Other than the kidneys, lungs, liver and skin also help in the elimination of excretory wastes.

Our lungs remove large amounts of CO_2 (approximately 200mL/ minute) and also significant quantities of water every day. Liver, the largest gland in our body, secretes bile-containing substances like bilirubin, biliverdin, cholesterol, degraded steroid hormones, vitamins and drugs. Most of these substances ultimately pass out along with digestive wastes.

The sweat and sebaceous glands in the skin can eliminate certain substances through their secretions. Sweat produced by the sweat glands is a watery fluid containing NaCl, small amounts of urea, lactic acid, etc. Though the primary function of sweat is to facilitate a cooling effect on the body surface, it also helps in the removal of some of the wastes mentioned above. Sebaceous glands eliminate certain substances like sterols, hydrocarbons and waxes through sebum. This secretion provides a protective oily covering for the skin. Do you know that small amounts of nitrogenous wastes could be eliminated through saliva too?

16.8 DISORDERS OF THE EXCRETORY SYSTEM

Malfunctioning of kidneys can lead to accumulation of urea in blood, a condition called **uremia**, which is highly harmful and may lead to kidney failure. In such patients, urea can be removed by a process called **hemodialysis**. During the process of haemodialysis, the blood drained from a convenient artery is pumped into a dialysing unit called **artificial kidney**. Blood drained from a convenient artery is pumped into a dialysing unit after adding an anticoagulant like heparin. The unit contains a coiled cellophane tube surrounded by a fluid (dialysing fluid) having the same composition as that of plasma except the nitrogenous wastes. The porous cellophane membrance of the tube allows the passage of molecules based on concentration gradient. As nitrogenous wastes are absent in the dialysing fluid, these substances freely move out, thereby clearing the blood. The cleared blood is pumped back to the body through a vein after adding anti-heparin to it. This method is a boon for thousands of uremic patients all over the world.

Kidney transplantation is the ultimate method in the correction of acute **renal failures** (kidney failure). A functioning kidney is used in transplantation from a donor, preferably a close relative, to minimise its chances of rejection by the immune system of the host. Modern clinical procedures have increased the success rate of such a complicated technique.

Renal calculi: Stone or insoluble mass of crystallised salts (oxalates, etc.) formed within the kidney.

Glomerulonephritis: Inflammation of glomeruli of kidney.

SUMMARY

Many nitrogen containing substances, ions, CO_2, water, etc., that accumulate in the body have to be eliminated. Nature of nitrogenous wastes formed and their excretion vary among animals, mainly depending on the habitat (availability of water). Ammonia, urea and uric acid are the major nitrogenous wastes excreted.

Protonephridia, nephridia, malpighian tubules, green glands and the kidneys are the common excretory organs in animals. They not only eliminate nitrogenous wastes but also help in the maintenance of ionic and acid-base balance of body fluids.

In humans, the excretory system consists of one pair of kidneys, a pair of ureters, a urinary bladder and a urethra. Each kidney has over a million tubular structures called nephrons. Nephron is the functional unit of kidney and has two portions – glomerulus and renal tubule. Glomerulus is a tuft of capillaries formed from afferent arterioles, fine branches of renal artery. The renal tubule starts with a double walled Bowman's capsule and is further differentiated into a proximal convoluted tubule (PCT), Henle's loop (HL) and distal convoluted tubule (DCT). The DCTs of many nephrons join to a common collecting duct many of which ultimately open into the renal pelvis through the medullary pyramids. The Bowman's capsule encloses the glomerulus to form Malpighian or renal corpuscle.

Urine formation involves three main processes, i.e., filtration, reabsorption and secretion. Filtration is a non-selective process performed by the glomerulus using the glomerular capillary blood pressure. About 1200 ml of blood is filtered by the glomerulus per minute to form 125 ml of filtrate in the Bowman's capsule per minute (GFR). JGA, a specialised portion of the nephrons, plays a significant role in the regulation of GFR. Nearly 99 per cent reabsorption of the filtrate takes place through different parts of the nephrons. PCT is the major site of reabsorption and selective secretion. HL primarily helps to maintain osmolar gradient (300 mOsmolL^{-1} -1200 mOsmolL^{-1}) within the kidney interstitium. DCT and collecting duct allow extensive reabsorption of water and certain electrolytes, which help in osmoregulation: H^+, K^+ and NH_3 could be secreted into the filtrate by the tubules to maintain the ionic balance and pH of body fluids.

A counter current mechanism operates between the two limbs of the loop of Henle and those of *vasa recta* (capillary parallel to Henle's loop). The filtrate gets concentrated as it moves down the descending limb but is diluted by the ascending limb. Electrolytes and urea are retained in the interstitium by this arrangement. DCT and collecting duct concentrate the filtrate about four times, i.e., from 300 mOsmolL^{-1} to 1200 mOsmolL^{-1}, an excellent mechanism of conservation of water. Urine is stored in the urinary bladder till a voluntary signal from CNS carries out its release through urethra, i.e., micturition. Skin, lungs and liver also assist in excretion.

EXERCISES

1. Define Glomerular Filtration Rate (GFR)
2. Explain the autoregulatory mechanism of GFR.
3. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false :
   (a) Micturition is carried out by a reflex.
   (b) ADH helps in water elimination, making the urine hypotonic.
   (c) Protein-free fluid is filtered from blood plasma into the Bowman's capsule.
   (d) Henle's loop plays an important role in concentrating the urine.
   (e) Glucose is actively reabsorbed in the proximal convoluted tubule.
4. Give a brief account of the counter current mechanism.
5. Describe the role of liver, lungs and skin in excretion.
6. Explain micturition.
7. Match the items of column I with those of column II :

Column I	**Column II**
(a) Ammonotelism	(i) Birds
(b) Bowman's capsule	(ii) Water reabsorption
(c) Micturition	(iii) Bony fish
(d) Uricotelism	(iv) Urinary bladder
(d) ADH	(v) Renal tubule

8. What is meant by the term osmoregulation?
9. Terrestrial animals are generally either ureotelic or uricotelic, not ammonotelic, why ?
10. What is the significance of juxta glomerular apparatus (JGA) in kidney function?
11. Name the following:
    (a) A chordate animal having flame cells as excretory structures
    (b) Cortical portions projecting between the medullary pyramids in the human kidney
    (c) A loop of capillary running parallel to the Henle's loop.
12. Fill in the gaps :
    (a) Ascending limb of Henle's loop is _______ to water whereas the descending limb is _______ to it.
    (b) Reabsorption of water from distal parts of the tubules is facilitated by hormone _______.
    (c) Dialysis fluid contain all the constituents as in plasma except _______.
    (d) A healthy adult human excretes (on an average) _______ gm of urea/day.

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CHAPTER 17

LOCOMOTION AND MOVEMENT

17.1 Types of Movement

17.2 Muscle

17.3 Skeletal System

17.4 Joints

17.5 Disorders of Muscular and Skeletal System

Movement is one of the significant features of living beings. Animals and plants exhibit a wide range of movements. Streaming of protoplasm in the unicellular organisms like *Amoeba* is a simple form of movement. Movement of cilia, flagella and tentacles are shown by many organisms. Human beings can move limbs, jaws, eyelids, tongue, etc. Some of the movements result in a change of place or location. Such voluntary movements are called **locomotion**. Walking, running, climbing, flying and swimming are all some forms of locomotory movements. Locomotory structures need not be different from those affecting other types of movements. For example, in *Paramoecium*, cilia helps in the movement of food through cytopharynx and in locomotion as well. *Hydra* can use its tentacles for capturing its prey and also use them for locomotion. We use limbs for changes in body postures and locomotion as well. The above observations suggest that movements and locomotion cannot be studied separately. The two may be linked by stating that all locomotions are movements but all movements are not locomotions.

Methods of locomotion performed by animals vary with their habitats and the demand of the situation. However, locomotion is generally for search of food, shelter, mate, suitable breeding grounds, favourable climatic conditions or to escape from enemies/predators.

17.1 TYPES OF MOVEMENT

Cells of the human body exhibit three main types of movements, namely, amoeboid, ciliary and muscular.

Some specialised cells in our body like macrophages and leucocytes in blood exhibit amoeboid movement. It is effected by pseudopodia formed by the streaming of protoplasm (as in *Amoeba*). Cytoskeletal elements like microfilaments are also involved in amoeboid movement.

Ciliary movement occurs in most of our internal tubular organs which are lined by ciliated epithelium. The coordinated movements of cilia in the trachea help us in removing dust particles and some of the foreign substances inhaled along with the atmospheric air. Passage of ova through the female reproductive tract is also facilitated by the ciliary movement.

Movement of our limbs, jaws, tongue, etc, require muscular movement. The contractile property of muscles are effectively used for locomotion and other movements by human beings and majority of multicellular organisms. Locomotion requires a perfect coordinated activity of muscular, skeletal and neural systems. In this chapter, you will learn about the types of muscles, their structure, mechanism of their contraction and important aspects of the skeletal system.

17.2 MUSCLE

You have studied in Chapter 8 that the cilia and flagella are the outgrowths of the cell membrane. **Flagellar movement** helps in the swimming of spermatozoa, maintenance of water current in the canal system of sponges and in locomotion of Protists like *Euglena.* Muscle is a specialised tissue of mesodermal origin. About 40-50 per cent of the body weight of a human adult is contributed by muscles. They have special properties like excitability, contractility, extensibility and elasticity. Muscles have been classified using different criteria, namely location, appearance and nature of regulation of their activities. Based on their location, three types of muscles are identified : (i) Skeletal (ii) Visceral and (iii) Cardiac.

Skeletal muscles are closely associated with the skeletal components of the body. They have a striped appearance under the microscope and hence are called **striated muscles**. As their activities are under the voluntary control of the nervous system, they are known as voluntary muscles too. They are primarily involved in locomotory actions and changes of body postures.

Visceral muscles are located in the inner walls of hollow visceral organs of the body like the alimentary canal, reproductive tract, etc. They do not exhibit any striation and are smooth in appearance. Hence, they are called **smooth muscles (nonstriated muscle).** Their activities are not under the voluntary control of the nervous system and are therefore known as involuntary muscles. They assist, for example, in the transportation of food through the digestive tract and gametes through the genital tract.

As the name suggests, **Cardiac muscles** are the muscles of heart. Many cardiac muscle cells assemble in a branching pattern to form a cardiac muscle. Based on appearance, cardiac muscles are striated. They are involuntary in nature as the nervous system does not control their activities directly.

Let us examine a skeletal muscle in detail to understand the structure and mechanism of contraction. Each organised skeletal muscle in our body is made of a number of **muscle bundles** or **fascicles** held together by a common collagenous connective tissue layer called **fascia**. Each muscle bundle contains a number of muscle fibres (Figure 17.1). Each

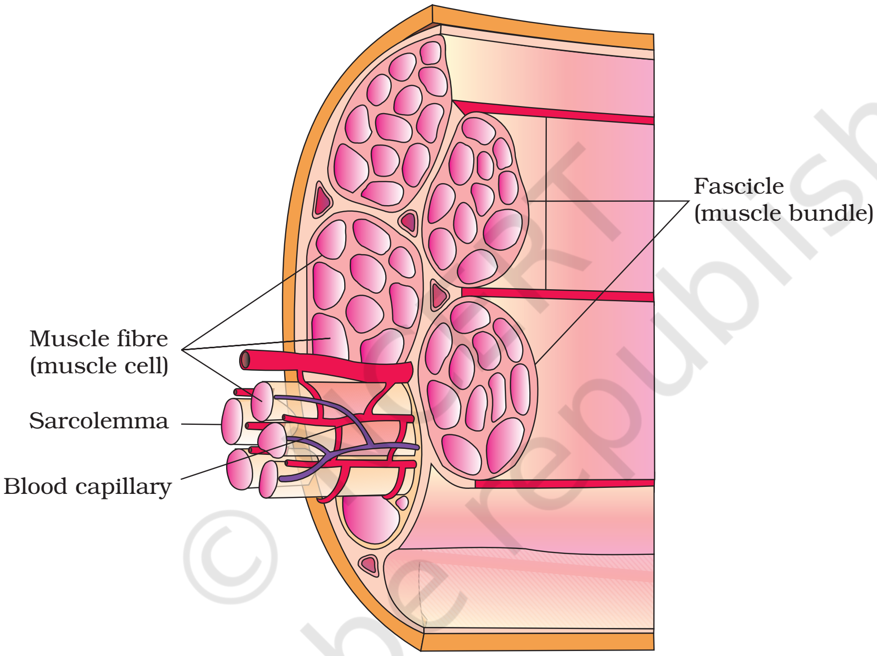

Figure 17.1 Diagrammatic cross sectional view of a muscle showing muscle bundles and muscle fibres

muscle fibre is lined by the plasma membrane called sarcolemma enclosing the sarcoplasm. Muscle fibre is a syncitium as the sarcoplasm contains many nuclei. The endoplasmic reticulum, i.e., sarcoplasmic reticulum of the muscle fibres is the store house of calcium ions. A characteristic feature of the muscle fibre is the presence of a large number of parallelly arranged filaments in the sarcoplasm called myofilaments or **myofibrils**. Each myofibril has alternate dark and light bands on it. A detailed study of the myofibril has established that the striated appearance is due to the distribution pattern of two important proteins – **Actin** and **Myosin**. The light bands contain actin and is called I-band or Isotropic band, whereas the dark band called 'A' or Anisotropic band contains myosin. Both the proteins are arranged as rod-like structures, parallel to each other and also to the longitudinal axis of the myofibrils. Actin filaments are thinner as compared to the myosin filaments, hence are commonly called thin and thick filaments respectively. In the centre of each ‘I’ band is an elastic fibre called ‘Z’ line which bisects it. The thin filaments are firmly attached to the ‘Z’ line. The thick filaments in the ‘A’ band are also held together in the middle of this band by a thin fibrous membrane called ‘M’ line. The ‘A’ and ‘I’ bands are arranged alternately throughout the length of the myofibrils. The portion of the myofibril between two successive ‘Z’ lines is considered as the functional unit of contraction and is called a sarcomere (Figure 17.2). In a resting state, the edges of thin filaments on either side of the thick filaments partially overlap the free ends of the thick filaments leaving the central part of the thick filaments. This central part of thick filament, not overlapped by thin filaments is called the ‘H’ zone.

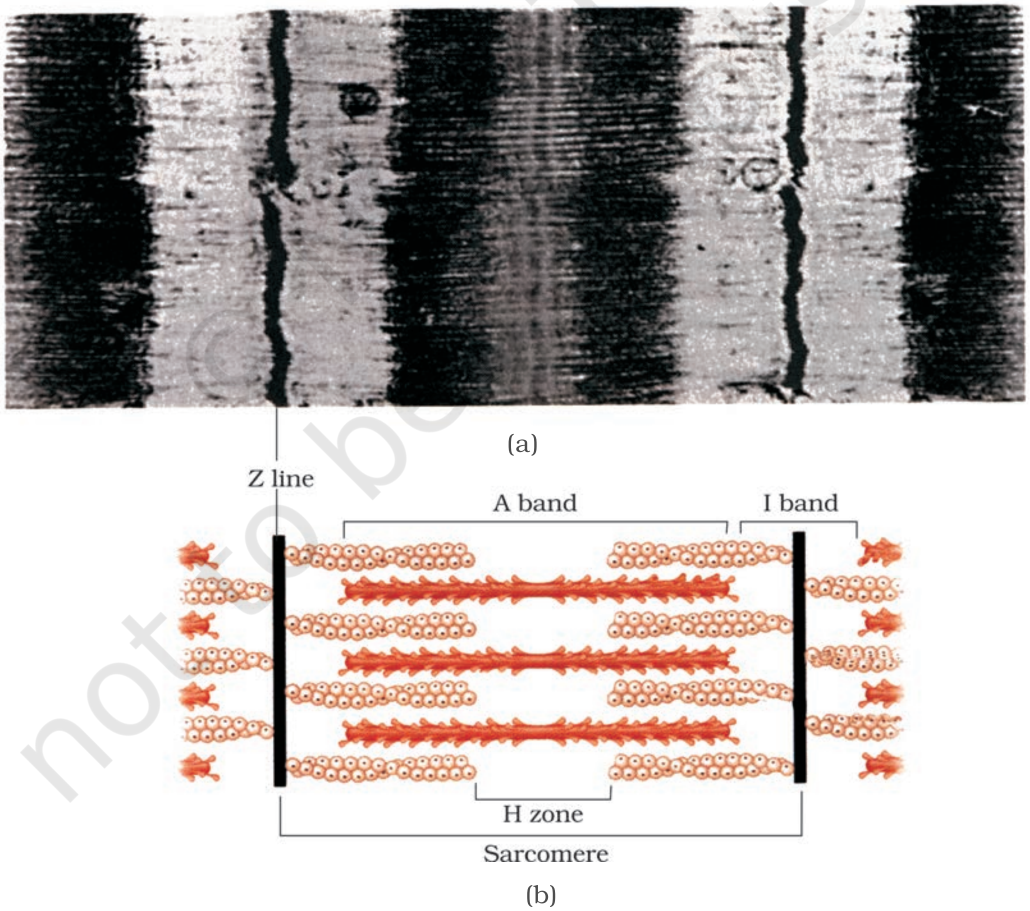

Figure 17.2 Diagrammatic representation of (a) anatomy of a muscle fibre showing a sarcomere (b) a sarcomere

17.2.1 Structure of Contractile Proteins

Each actin (thin) filament is made of two ‘F’ (filamentous) actins helically wound to each other. Each ‘F’ actin is a polymer of monomeric ‘G’ (Globular) actins. Two filaments of another protein, tropomyosin also run close to the ‘F’ actins throughout its length. A complex protein Troponin is distributed at regular intervals on the tropomyosin. In the resting state a subunit of troponin masks the active binding sites for myosin on the actin filaments (Figure 17.3a).

Each myosin (thick) filament is also a polymerised protein. Many monomeric proteins called Meromyosins (Figure 17.3b) constitute one thick filament. Each meromyosin has two important parts, a globular head with a short arm and a tail, the former being called the heavy meromyosin (HMM) and the latter, the light meromyosin (LMM). The HMM component, i.e.; the head and short arm projects outwards at regular distance and angle from each other from the surface of a polymerised myosin filament and is known as cross arm. The globular head is an active ATPase enzyme and has binding sites for ATP and active sites for actin.

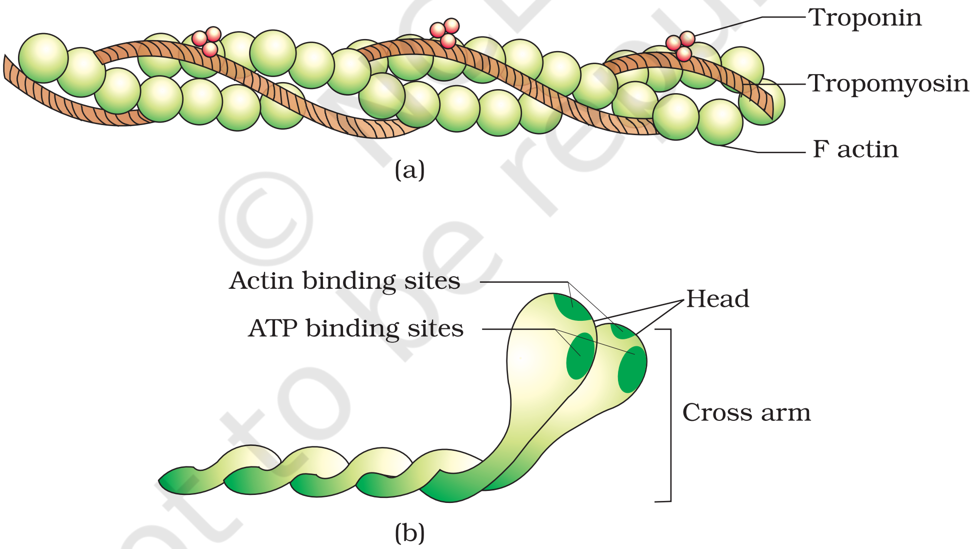

Figure 17.3 (a) An actin (thin) filament (b) Myosin monomer (Meromyosin)

17.2.2 Mechanism of Muscle Contraction

Mechanism of muscle contraction is best explained by the sliding filament theory which states that contraction of a muscle fibre takes place by the sliding of the thin filaments over the thick filaments.

Muscle contraction is initiated by a signal sent by the central nervous system (CNS) via a motor neuron. A motor neuron along with the muscle fibres connected to it constitute a motor unit. The junction between a motor neuron and the sarcolemma of the muscle fibre is called the neuromuscular junction or motor-end plate. A neural signal reaching this junction releases a neurotransmitter (Acetyl choline) which generates an action potential in the sarcolemma. This spreads through the muscle fibre and causes the release of calcium ions into the sarcoplasm. Increase in Ca^{++} level leads to the binding of calcium with a subunit of troponin on actin filaments and thereby remove the masking of active sites for myosin. Utilising the energy from ATP hydrolysis, the myosin head now binds to the exposed active sites on actin to form a cross bridge (Figure 17.4).

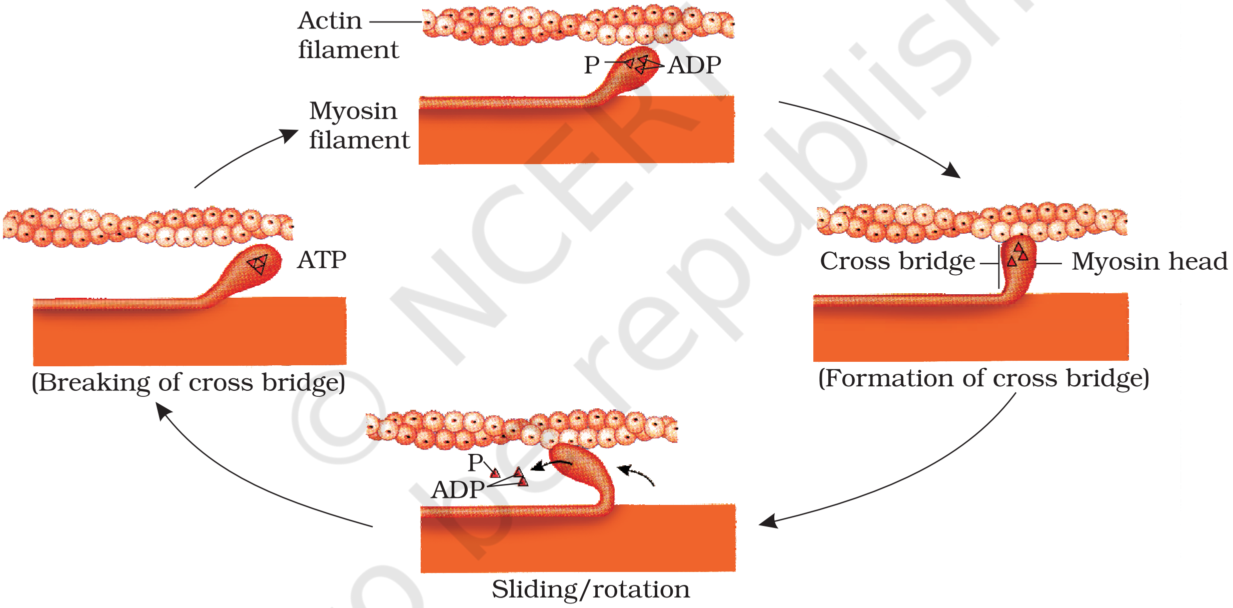

Figure 17.4 Stages in cross bridge formation, rotation of head and breaking of cross bridge

This pulls the attached actin filaments towards the centre of 'A' band. The 'Z' line attached to these actins are also pulled inwards thereby causing a shortening of the sarcomere, i.e., contraction. It is clear from the above steps, that during shortening of the muscle, i.e., contraction, the 'I' bands get reduced, whereas the 'A' bands retain the length (Figure 17.5). The myosin, releasing the ADP and P_1 goes back to its relaxed state. A new ATP binds and the cross-bridge is broken (Figure 17.4). The ATP is again hydrolysed by the myosin head and the cycle of cross bridge formation

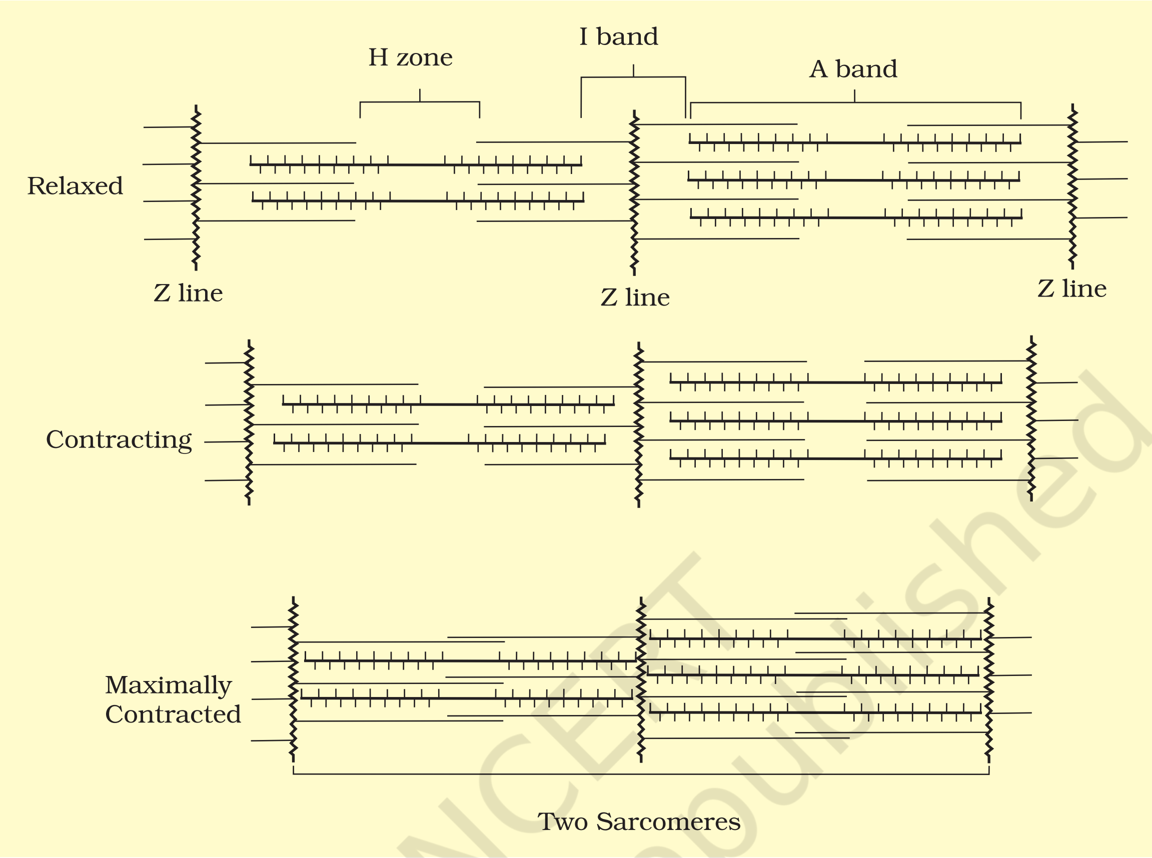

Figure 17.5 Sliding-filament theory of muscle contraction (movement of the thin filaments and the relative size of the I band and H zones)

and breakage is repeated causing further sliding. The process continues till the Ca^{++} ions are pumped back to the sarcoplasmic cisternae resulting in the masking of actin filaments. This causes the return of 'Z' lines back to their original position, i.e., relaxation. The reaction time of the fibres can vary in different muscles. Repeated activation of the muscles can lead to the accumulation of lactic acid due to anaerobic breakdown of glycogen in them, causing fatigue. Muscle contains a red coloured oxygen storing pigment called myoglobin. Myoglobin content is high in some of the muscles which gives a reddish appearance. Such muscles are called the Red fibres. These muscles also contain plenty of mitochondria which can utilise the large amount of oxygen stored in them for ATP production. These muscles, therefore, can also be called aerobic muscles. On the other hand, some of the muscles possess very less quantity of myoglobin and therefore, appear pale or whitish. These are the White fibres. Number of mitochondria are also few in them, but the amount of sarcoplasmic reticulum is high. They depend on anaerobic process for energy.

17.3 SKELETAL SYSTEM

Skeletal system consists of a framework of bones and a few cartilages. This system has a significant role in movement shown by the body. Imagine chewing food without jaw bones and walking around without the limb bones. Bone and cartilage are specialised connective tissues. The former has a very hard matrix due to calcium salts in it and the latter has slightly pliable matrix due to chondroitin salts. In human beings, this system is made up of 206 bones and a few cartilages. It is grouped into two principal divisions – the axial and the appendicular skeleton.

Axial skeleton *comprises 80 bones distributed along the main axis of the body. The skull, vertebral column, sternum and ribs constitute axial skeleton. The* **skull** *(Figure 17.6) is composed of two sets of bones – cranial and facial, that totals to 22 bones. Cranial bones are 8 in number. They form the hard protective outer covering, cranium for the brain. The facial region is made up of 14 skeletal elements which form the front part of the skull. A single U-shaped bone called hyoid is present at the base of the buccal cavity. Each middle ear contains three tiny bones – Malleus, Incus and Stapes, collectively called* **Ear Ossicles***. The skull region articulates with the superior region of the*

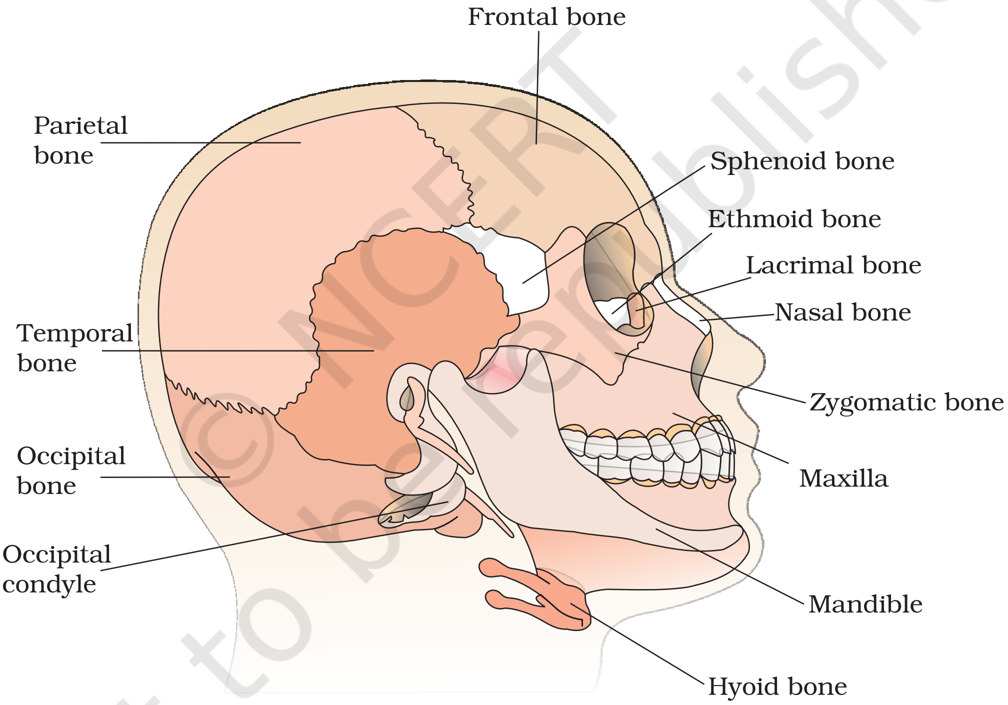
Frontal bone
Parietal bone
Sphenoid bone
Ethmoid bone
Lacrimal bone
Nasal bone
Temporal bone
Zygomatic bone
Maxilla
Occipital bone
Occipital condyle
Mandible
Hyoid bone

Figure 17.6 *Diagrammatic view of human skull*

vertebral column with the help of two occipital condyles (dicondylic skull).

Our **vertebral column** (Figure 17.7) is formed by 26 serially arranged units called vertebrae and is dorsally placed. It extends from the base of the skull and constitutes the main framework of the trunk. Each vertebra has a central hollow portion (neural canal) through which the spinal cord passes. First vertebra is the atlas and it articulates with the occipital condyles. The vertebral column is differentiated into cervical (7), thoracic (12), lumbar (5), sacral (1-fused) and coccygeal (1-fused) regions starting from the skull. The number of cervical vertebrae are seven in almost all mammals including human beings. The vertebral column protects the spinal cord, supports the head and serves as the point of attachment for the ribs and musculature of the back. **Sternum** is a flat bone on the ventral midline of thorax.

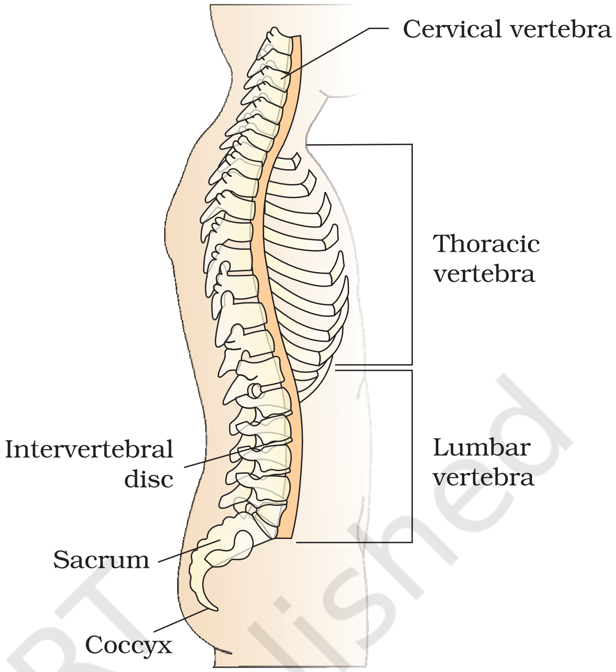

Figure 17.7 Vertebral column (right lateral view)

There are 12 pairs of **ribs.** Each rib is a thin flat bone connected dorsally to the vertebral column and ventrally to the sternum. It has two articulation surfaces on its dorsal end and is hence called bicephalic. First seven pairs of ribs are called true ribs. Dorsally, they are attached to the thoracic vertebrae and ventrally connected to the sternum with the help of hyaline cartilage. The 8th, 9th and 10th pairs of ribs do not articulate directly with the sternum but join the seventh rib with the help of hyaline cartilage. These are called vertebrochondral (false) ribs. Last 2 pairs (11th and 12th) of ribs are not connected ventrally and are therefore, called floating ribs. Thoracic vertebrae, ribs and sternum together form the rib cage (Figure 17.8).

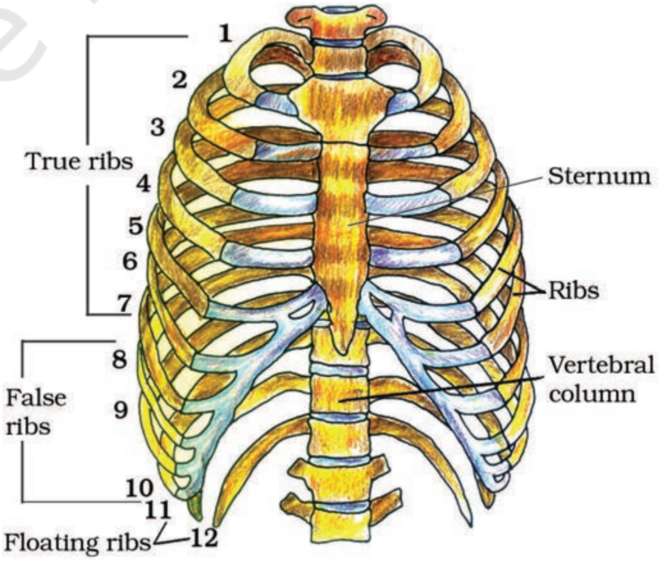

Figure 17.8 Ribs and rib cage

The bones of the limbs along with their girdles constitute the **appendicular skeleton.** Each **limb** is made of 30 bones. The bones of the hand (fore limb) are

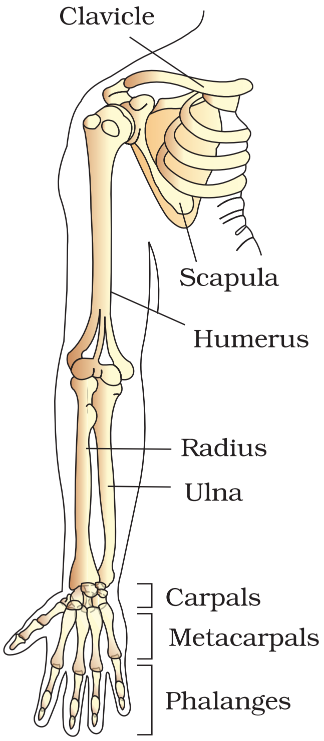

Figure 17.9 Right pectoral girdle and upper arm. (frontal view)

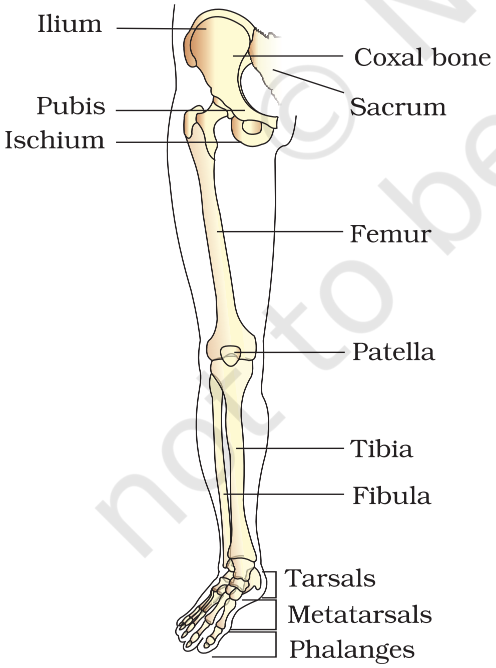

Figure 17.10 Right pelvic girdle and lower limb bones (frontal view)

humerus, radius and ulna, carpals (wrist bones – 8 in number), metacarpals (palm bones – 5 in number) and phalanges (digits – 14 in number) (Figure 17.9). Femur (thigh bone – the longest bone), tibia and fibula, tarsals (ankle bones – 7 in number), metatarsals (5 in number) and phalanges (digits – 14 in number) are the bones of the legs (hind limb) (Figure 17.10). A cup shaped bone called patella cover the knee ventrally (knee cap).

Pectoral and **Pelvic girdle** bones help in the articulation of the upper and the lower limbs respectively with the axial skeleton. Each girdle is formed of two halves. Each half of pectoral girdle consists of a clavicle and a scapula (Figure 17.9). Scapula is a large triangular flat bone situated in the dorsal part of the thorax between the second and the seventh ribs. The dorsal, flat, triangular body of scapula has a slightly elevated ridge called the spine which projects as a flat, expanded process called the acromion. The clavicle articulates with this. Below the acromion is a depression called the glenoid cavity which articulates with the head of the humerus to form the shoulder joint. Each clavicle is a long slender bone with two curvatures. This bone is commonly called the collar bone.

Pelvic girdle consists of two coxal bones (Figure 17.10). Each coxal bone is formed by the fusion of three bones – ilium, ischium and pubis. At the point of fusion of the above bones is a cavity called acetabulum to which the thigh bone articulates. The two halves of the pelvic girdle meet ventrally to form the pubic symphysis containing fibrous cartilage.

17.4 JOINTS

Joints are essential for all types of movements involving the bony parts of the body. Locomotory movements are no exception to this. Joints are points of contact between bones, or between bones and cartilages. Force generated by the muscles is used to carry out movement through joints, where the joint acts as a fulcrum. The movability at these joints vary depending on different factors. Joints have been classified into three major structural forms, namely, fibrous, cartilaginous and synovial.

Fibrous joints do not allow any movement. This type of joint is shown by the flat skull bones which fuse end-to-end with the help of dense fibrous connective tissues in the form of sutures, to form the cranium.

In **cartilaginous joints,** the bones involved are joined together with the help of cartilages. The joint between the adjacent vertebrae in the vertebral column is of this pattern and it permits limited movements.

Synovial joints are characterised by the presence of a fluid filled synovial cavity between the articulating surfaces of the two bones. Such an arragement allows considerable movement. These joints help in locomotion and many other movements. Ball and socket joint (between humerus and pectoral girdle), hinge joint (knee joint), pivot joint (between atlas and axis), gliding joint (between the carpals) and saddle joint (between carpal and metacarpal of thumb) are some examples.

17.5 DISORDERS OF MUSCULAR AND SKELETAL SYSTEM

Myasthenia gravis: Auto immune disorder affecting neuromuscular junction leading to fatigue, weakening and paralysis of skeletal muscle.

Muscular dystrophy: Progressive degeneration of skeletal muscle mostly due to genetic disorder.

Tetany: Rapid spasms (wild contractions) in muscle due to low Ca^{++} in body fluid.

Arthritis: Inflammation of joints.

Osteoporosis: Age-related disorder characterised by decreased bone mass and increased chances of fractures. Decreased levels of estrogen is a common cause.

Gout: Inflammation of joints due to accumulation of uric acid crystals.

SUMMARY

Movement is an essential feature of all living beings. Protoplasmic streaming, ciliary movements, movements of fins, limbs, wings, etc., are some forms exhibited by animals. A voluntary movement which causes the animal to change its place, is called locomotion. Animals move generally in search of food, shelter, mate, breeding ground, better climate or to protect themselves.

The cells of the human body exhibit amoeboid, ciliary and muscular movements. Locomotion and many other movements require coordinated muscular activities. Three types of muscles are present in our body. Skeletal muscles are attached to skeletal elements. They appear striated and are voluntary in nature. Visceral muscles, present in the inner walls of visceral organs are nonstriated and involuntary. Cardiac muscles are the muscles of the heart. They are striated, branched and involuntary. Muscles possess excitability, contractility, extensibility and elasticity.

Muscle fibre is the anatomical unit of muscle. Each muscle fibre has many parallelly arranged myofibrils. Each myofibril contains many serially arranged units called sarcomere which are the functional units. Each sarcomere has a central 'A' band made of thick myosin filaments, and two half 'I' bands made of thin actin filaments on either side of it marked by 'Z' lines. Actin and myosin are polymerised proteins with contractility. The active sites for myosin on resting actin filament are masked by a protein-troponin. Myosin head contains ATPase and has ATP binding sites and active sites for actin. A motor neuron carries signal to the muscle fibre which generates an action potential in it. This causes the release of Ca^{++} from sarcoplasmic reticulum. Ca^{++} activates actin which binds to the myosin head to form a cross bridge. These cross bridges pull the actin filaments causing them to slide over the myosin filaments and thereby causing contraction. Ca^{++} are then returned to sarcoplasmic reticulum which inactivate the actin. Cross bridges are broken and the muscles relax.

Repeated stimulation of muscles leads to fatigue. Muscles are classified as Red and White fibres based primarily on the amount of red coloured myoglobin pigment in them.

Bones and cartilages constitute our skeletal system. The skeletal system is divisible into axial and appendicular. Skull, vertebral column, ribs and sternum constitute the axial skeleton. Limb bones and girdles form the appendicular skeleton. Three types of joints are formed between bones or between bone and cartilage – fibrous, cartilaginous and synovial. Synovial joints allow considerable movements and therefore, play a significant role in locomotion.

EXERCISES

1. Draw the diagram of a sarcomere of skeletal muscle showing different regions.
2. Define sliding filament theory of muscle contraction.
3. Describe the important steps in muscle contraction.

4. Write true or false. If false change the statement so that it is true.
   (a) Actin is present in thin filament
   (b) H-zone of striated muscle fibre represents both thick and thin filaments.
   (c) Human skeleton has 206 bones.
   (d) There are 11 pairs of ribs in man.
   (e) Sternum is present on the ventral side of the body.
5. Write the difference between :
   (a) Actin and Myosin
   (b) Red and White muscles
   (c) Pectoral and Pelvic girdle
6. Match Column I with Column II :

Column I	Column II
(a) Smooth muscle	(i) Myoglobin
(b) Tropomyosin	(ii) Thin filament
(c) Red muscle	(iii) Sutures
(d) Skull	(iv) Involuntary

7. What are the different types of movements exhibited by the cells of human body?
8. How do you distinguish between a skeletal muscle and a cardiac muscle?
9. Name the type of joint between the following:-
   (a) atlas/axis
   (b) carpal/metacarpal of thumb
   (c) between phalanges
   (d) femur/acetabulum
   (e) between cranial bones
   (f) between pubic bones in the pelvic girdle
10. Fill in the blank spaces:
    (a) All mammals (except a few) have __________ cervical vertebra.
    (b) The number of phalanges in each limb of human is __________
    (c) Thin filament of myofibril contains 2 'F' actins and two other proteins namely __________ and __________.
    (d) In a muscle fibre Ca^{++} is stored in __________
    (e) __________ and __________ pairs of ribs are called floating ribs.
    (f) The human cranium is made of __________ bones.

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CHAPTER 18

NEURAL CONTROL AND COORDINATION

18.1 Neural System
18.2 Human Neural System
18.3 Neuron as Structural and Functional Unit of Neural System
18.4 Central Neural System

As you know, the functions of the organs/organ systems in our body must be coordinated to maintain homeostasis. **Coordination** is the process through which two or more organs interact and complement the functions of one another. For example, when we do physical exercises, the energy demand is increased for maintaining an increased muscular activity. The supply of oxygen is also increased. The increased supply of oxygen necessitates an increase in the rate of respiration, heart beat and increased blood flow via blood vessels. When physical exercise is stopped, the activities of nerves, lungs, heart and kidney gradually return to their normal conditions. Thus, the functions of muscles, lungs, heart, blood vessels, kidney and other organs are coordinated while performing physical exercises. In our body the neural system and the endocrine system jointly coordinate and integrate all the activities of the organs so that they function in a synchronised fashion.

The neural system provides an organised network of point-to-point connections for a quick coordination. The endocrine system provides chemical integration through hormones. In this chapter, you will learn about the neural system of human, mechanisms of neural coordination like transmission of nerve impulse and impulse conduction across a synapse.

18.1 NEURAL SYSTEM

The neural system of all animals is composed of highly specialised cells called **neurons** which can detect, receive and transmit different kinds of stimuli.

The neural organisation is very simple in lower invertebrates. For example, in *Hydra* it is composed of a network of neurons. The neural system is better organised in insects, where a brain is present along with a number of ganglia and neural tissues. The vertebrates have a more developed neural system.

18.2 HUMAN NEURAL SYSTEM

The human neural system is divided into two parts :

(i) the **central neural system** (CNS)
(ii) the **peripheral neural system** (PNS)

The CNS includes the **brain** and the **spinal cord** and is the site of information processing and control. The PNS comprises of all the nerves of the body associated with the CNS (brain and spinal cord). The nerve fibres of the PNS are of two types :

(a) **afferent fibres**
(b) **efferent fibres**

The afferent nerve fibres transmit impulses from tissues/organs to the CNS and the efferent fibres transmit regulatory impulses from the CNS to the concerned peripheral tissues/organs.

The PNS is divided into two divisions called **somatic neural system** and **autonomic neural system**. The somatic neural system relays impulses from the CNS to skeletal muscles while the autonomic neural system transmits impulses from the CNS to the involuntary organs and smooth muscles of the body. The autonomic neural system is further classified into **sympathetic neural system** and **parasympathetic neural system**.

Visceral nervous system is the part of the peripheral nervous system that comprises the whole complex of nerves, fibres, ganglia, and plexuses by which impulses travel from the central nervous system to the viscera and from the viscera to the central nervous system.

18.3 NEURON AS STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL UNIT OF NEURAL SYSTEM

A neuron is a microscopic structure composed of three major parts, namely, **cell body**, **dendrites** and **axon** (Figure 18.1). The cell body contains cytoplasm with typical cell organelles and certain granular bodies called **Nissl's granules**. Short fibres which branch repeatedly and project out of the cell body also

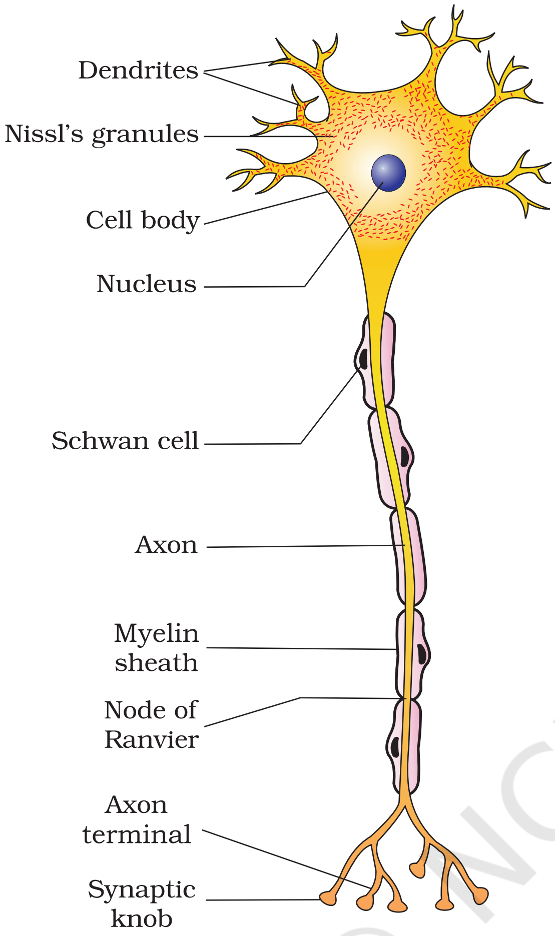

Figure 18.1 Structure of a neuron

contain Nissl's granules and are called dendrites. These fibres transmit impulses towards the cell body. The axon is a long fibre, the distal end of which is branched. Each branch terminates as a bulb-like structure called **synaptic knob** which possess synaptic vesicles containing chemicals called **neurotransmitters**. The axons transmit nerve impulses away from the cell body to a synapse or to a neuro-muscular junction. Based on the number of axon and dendrites, the neurons are divided into three types, i.e., **multipolar** (with one axon and two or more dendrites; found in the cerebral cortex), **bipolar** (with one axon and one dendrite, found in the retina of eye) and **unipolar** (cell body with one axon only; found usually in the embryonic stage). There are two types of axons, namely, **myelinated** and **non-myelinated**. The myelinated nerve fibres are enveloped with **Schwann cells,** which form a myelin sheath around the axon. The gaps between two adjacent myelin sheaths are called **nodes of Ranvier**. Myelinated nerve fibres are found in spinal and cranial nerves. Unmyelinated nerve fibre is enclosed by a Schwann cell that does not form a myelin sheath around the axon, and is commonly found in autonomous and the somatic neural systems.

18.3.1 Generation and Conduction of Nerve Impulse

Neurons are excitable cells because their membranes are in a polarised state. *Do you know why the membrane of a neuron is polarised?* Different types of ion channels are present on the neural membrane. These ion channels are selectively permeable to different ions. When a neuron is not conducting any impulse, i.e., resting, the axonal membrane is comparatively more permeable to potassium ions (K^+) and nearly impermeable to sodium ions (Na^+). Similarly, the membrane is impermeable to negatively charged proteins present in the axoplasm. Consequently, the axoplasm inside the axon contains high concentration of K^+ and negatively charged proteins and low concentration of Na^+. In contrast, the fluid outside the axon contains a low concentration of K^+, a high concentration of Na^+ and thus form a concentration gradient. These ionic gradients across the resting membrane are maintained by the active transport of ions by the sodium-potassium pump which transports 3 Na^+ outwards for 2 K^+ into the cell. As a result, the outer surface of the axonal membrane possesses a positive charge while its inner surface

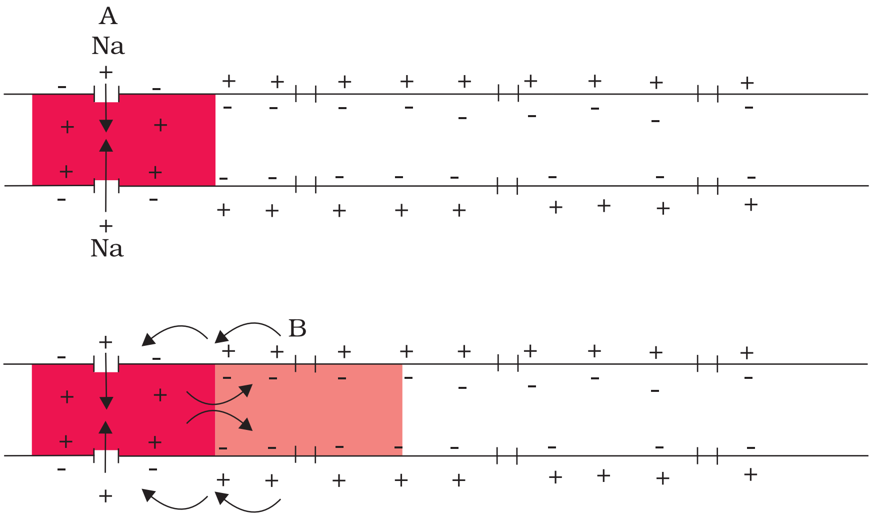

Figure 18.2 Diagrammatic representation of impulse conduction through an axon (at points A and B)

becomes negatively charged and, therefore is, polarised. The electrical potential difference across the resting plasma membrane is called as the **resting potential**.

You might be curious to know about the mechanisms of generation of nerve impulse and its conduction along an axon. When a stimulus is applied at a site (Figure 18.2 e.g., point A) on the polarised membrane, the membrane at the site A becomes freely permeable to Na^+. This leads to a rapid influx of Na^+ followed by the reversal of the polarity at that site, i.e., the outer surface of the membrane becomes negatively charged and the inner side becomes positively charged. The polarity of the membrane at the site A is thus reversed and hence depolarised. The electrical potential difference across the plasma membrane at the site A is called the **action potential**, which is in fact termed as a **nerve impulse**. At sites immediately ahead, the axon (e.g., site B) membrane has a positive charge on the outer surface and a negative charge on its inner surface. As a result, a current flows on the inner surface from site A to site B. On the outer surface current flows from site B to site A (Figure 18.2) to complete the circuit of current flow. Hence, the polarity at the site is reversed, and an action potential is generated at site B. Thus, the **impulse** (action potential) generated at site A arrives at site B. The sequence is repeated along the length of the axon and consequently the impulse is conducted. The rise in the stimulus-induced permeability to Na^+ is extremely short-lived. It is quickly followed by a rise in permeability to K^+. Within a fraction of a second, K^+ diffuses outside the membrane and restores the resting potential of the membrane at the site of excitation and the fibre becomes once more responsive to further stimulation.

18.3.2 Transmission of Impulses

A nerve impulse is transmitted from one neuron to another through junctions called synapses. A **synapse** is formed by the membranes of a pre-synaptic neuron and a post-synaptic neuron, which may or may not be separated by a gap called **synaptic cleft**. There are two types of synapses, namely, electrical synapses and chemical synapses. At electrical synapses, the membranes of pre- and post-synaptic neurons are in very close proximity. Electrical current can flow directly from one neuron into the other across these synapses. Transmission of an impulse across electrical synapses is very similar to impulse conduction along a single axon. Impulse transmission across an electrical synapse is always faster than that across a chemical synapse. Electrical synapses are rare in our system.

At a chemical synapse, the membranes of the pre- and post-synaptic neurons are separated by a fluid-filled space called synaptic cleft (Figure 18.3). *Do you know how the pre-synaptic neuron transmits an impulse (action potential) across the synaptic cleft to the post-synaptic neuron*? Chemicals called neurotransmitters are involved in the transmission of impulses at these synapses. The axon terminals contain vesicles filled with these neurotransmitters. When an impulse (action potential) arrives at the axon terminal, it stimulates the movement of the synaptic vesicles towards the membrane where they fuse with the plasma

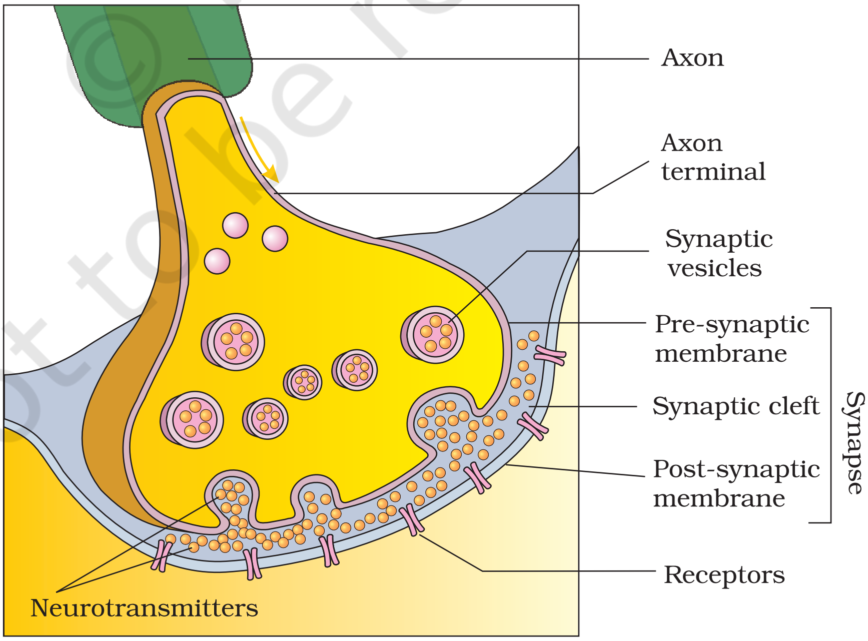

Figure 18.3 Diagram showing axon terminal and synapse

membrane and release their neurotransmitters in the synaptic cleft. The released neurotransmitters bind to their specific **receptors**, present on the post-synaptic membrane. This binding opens ion channels allowing the entry of ions which can generate a new potential in the post-synaptic neuron. The new potential developed may be either excitatory or inhibitory.

18.4 CENTRAL NEURAL SYSTEM

The brain is the central information processing organ of our body, and acts as the 'command and control system'. It controls the voluntary movements, balance of the body, functioning of vital involuntary organs (e.g., lungs, heart, kidneys, etc.), thermoregulation, hunger and thirst, circadian (24-hour) rhythms of our body, activities of several endocrine glands and human behaviour. It is also the site for processing of vision, hearing, speech, memory, intelligence, emotions and thoughts.

The human brain is well protected by the skull. Inside the skull, the brain is covered by **cranial meninges** consisting of an outer layer called **dura mater**, a very thin middle layer called **arachnoid** and an inner layer (which is in contact with the brain tissue) called **pia mater**. The brain can be divided into three major parts: (i) **forebrain**, (ii) **midbrain**, and (iii) **hindbrain** (Figure 18.4).

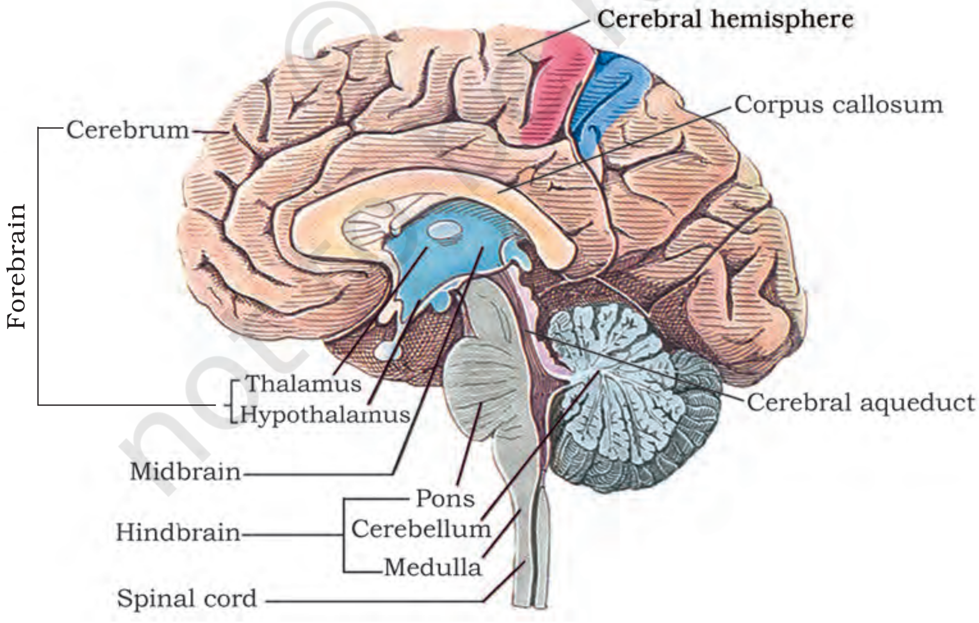
Cerebral hemisphere
Corpus callosum
Cerebrum
Forebrain
Thalamus
Hypothalamus
Cerebral aqueduct
Midbrain
Pons
Hindbrain
Cerebellum
Medulla
Spinal cord

Figure 18.4 Diagram showing sagital section of the human brain

18.4.1 Forebrain

The forebrain consists of **cerebrum**, **thalamus** and **hypothalamus** (Figure 18.4). Cerebrum forms the major part of the human brain. A deep cleft divides the cerebrum longitudinally into two halves, which are termed as the left and right **cerebral hemispheres**. The hemispheres are connected by a tract of nerve fibres called **corpus callosum**. The layer of cells which covers the cerebral hemisphere is called cerebral cortex and is thrown into prominent folds. The cerebral cortex is referred to as the grey matter due to its greyish appearance. The neuron cell bodies are concentrated here giving the colour. The cerebral cortex contains motor areas, sensory areas and large regions that are neither clearly sensory nor motor in function. These regions called as the **association areas** are responsible for complex functions like intersensory associations, memory and communication. Fibres of the tracts are covered with the myelin sheath, which constitute the inner part of cerebral hemisphere. They give an opaque white appearance to the layer and, hence, is called the white matter. The cerebrum wraps around a structure called thalamus, which is a major coordinating centre for sensory and motor signaling. Another very important part of the brain called **hypothalamus** lies at the base of the thalamus. The hypothalamus contains a number of centres which control body temperature, urge for eating and drinking. It also contains several groups of neurosecretory cells, which secrete hormones called hypothalamic hormones. The inner parts of cerebral hemispheres and a group of associated deep structures like amygdala, hippocampus, etc., form a complex structure called the limbic lobe or limbic system. Along with the hypothalamus, it is involved in the regulation of sexual behaviour, expression of emotional reactions (e.g., excitement, pleasure, rage and fear), and motivation.

18.4.2 Midbrain

The midbrain is located between the thalamus/hypothalamus of the forebrain and pons of the hindbrain. A canal called the **cerebral aqueduct** passess through the midbrain. The dorsal portion of the midbrain consists mainly of four round swellings (lobes) called **corpora quadrigemina**.

18.4.3 Hindbrain

The hindbrain comprises **pons**, **cerebellum** and **medulla** (also called the medulla oblongata). Pons consists of fibre tracts that interconnect different regions of the brain. Cerebellum has very convoluted surface in order to provide the additional space for many more neurons. The medulla of the brain is connected to the spinal cord. The medulla contains centres which control respiration, cardiovascular reflexes and gastric secretions.

Three major regions make up the brain stem; mid brain, pons and medulla oblongata. Brain stem forms the connections between the brain and spinal cord.

SUMMARY

The neural system coordinates and integrates functions as well as metabolic and homeostatic activities of all the organs. Neurons, the functional units of neural system are excitable cells due to a differential concentration gradient of ions across the membrane. The electrical potential difference across the resting neural membrane is called the 'resting potential'. The nerve impulse is conducted along the axon membrane in the form of a wave of depolarisation and repolarisation. A synapse is formed by the membranes of a pre-synaptic neuron and a post-synaptic neuron which may or may not be separated by a gap called synaptic cleft. Chemicals involved in the transmission of impulses at chemical synapses are called neurotransmitters.

Human neural system consists of two parts : (i) central neural system (CNS) and (ii) the peripheral neural system. The CNS consists of the brain and spiral cord. The brain can be divided into three major parts : (i) forebrain, (ii) midbrain and (iii) hindbrain. The forebrain consists of cerebrum, thalamus and hypothalamus. The cerebrum is longitudinally divided into two halves that are connected by the corpus callosum. A very important part of the forebrain called hypothalamus controls the body temperature, eating and drinking. Inner parts of cerebral hemispheres and a group of associated deep structures form a complex structure called limbic system which is concerned with olfaction, autonomic responses, regulation of sexual behaviour, expression of emotional reactions, and motivation. The midbrain receives and integrates visual, tactile and auditory inputs. The hindbrain comprises pons, cerebellum and medulla. The cerebellum integrates information received from the semicircular canals of the ear and the auditory system. The medulla contains centres, which control respiration, cardiovascular reflexes, and gastric secretions. Pons consist of fibre tracts that interconnect different regions of the brain.

EXERCISES

1. Briefly describe the structure of the Brain
2. Compare the following:
   (a) Central neural system (CNS) and Peripheral neural system (PNS)
   (b) Resting potential and action potential
3. Explain the following processes:
   (a) Polarisation of the membrane of a nerve fibre
   (b) Depolarisation of the membrane of a nerve fibre
   (c) Transmission of a nerve impulse across a chemical synapse

4. Draw labelled diagrams of the following:
   (a) Neuron (b) Brain
5. Write short notes on the following:
   (a) Neural coordination (b) Forebrain (c) Midbrain
   (d) Hindbrain (e) Synapse
6. Give a brief account of Mechanism of synaptic transmission.
7. Explain the role of Na^+ in the generation of action potential.
8. Differentiate between:
   (a) Myelinated and non-myelinated axons
   (b) Dendrites and axons
   (c) Thalamus and Hypothalamus
   (d) Cerebrum and Cerebellum
9. Answer the following:
   (a) Which part of the human brain is the most developed?
   (b) Which part of our central neural system acts as a master clock?
10. Distinguish between:
   (a) afferent neurons and efferent neurons
   (b) impulse conduction in a myelinated nerve fibre and unmyelinated nerve fibre
   (f) cranial nerves and spinal nerves.

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CHAPTER 19

CHEMICAL COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION

19.1 Endocrine Glands and Hormones

19.2 Human Endocrine System

19.3 Hormones of Heart, Kidney and Gastrointestinal Tract

19.4 Mechanism of Hormone Action

You have already learnt that the neural system provides a point-to-point rapid coordination among organs. The neural coordination is fast but short-lived. As the nerve fibres do not innervate all cells of the body and the cellular functions need to be continuously regulated; a special kind of coordination and integration has to be provided. This function is carried out by hormones. The neural system and the endocrine system jointly coordinate and regulate the physiological functions in the body.

19.1 ENDOCRINE GLANDS AND HORMONES

Endocrine glands lack ducts and are hence, called ductless glands. Their secretions are called hormones. The classical definition of hormone as a chemical produced by endocrine glands and released into the blood and transported to a distantly located target organ has current scientific definition as follows: **Hormones are non-nutrient chemicals which act as intercellular messengers and are produced in trace amounts**. The new definition covers a number of new molecules in addition to the hormones secreted by the organised endocrine glands. Invertebrates possess very simple endocrine systems with few hormones whereas a large number of chemicals act as hormones and provide coordination in the vertebrates. The human endocrine system is described here.

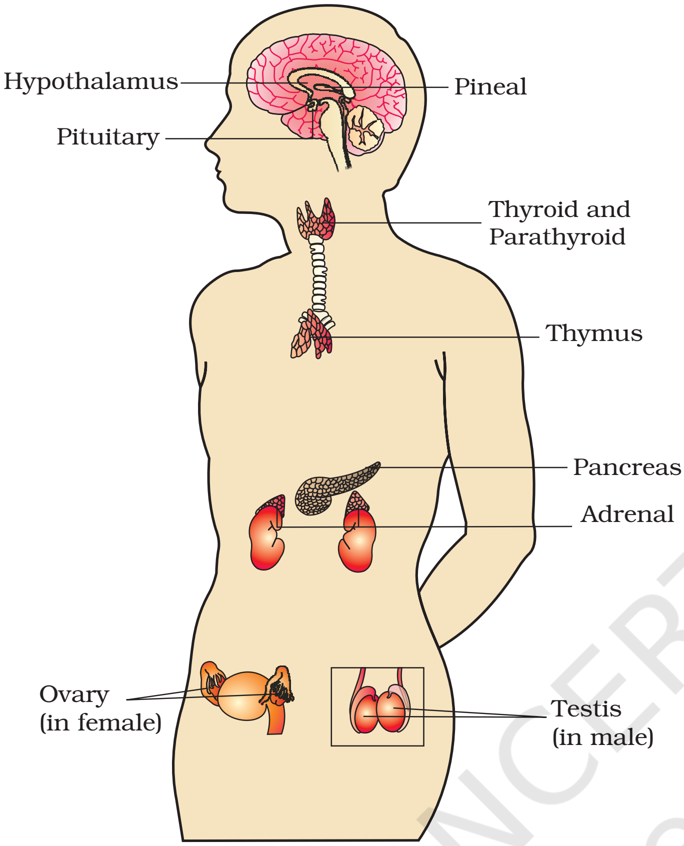


Figure 19.1 Location of endocrine glands

19.2 HUMAN ENDOCRINE SYSTEM

The endocrine glands and hormone producing diffused tissues/cells located in different parts of our body constitute the endocrine system. Pituitary, pineal, thyroid, adrenal, pancreas, parathyroid, thymus and gonads (testis in males and ovary in females) are the organised endocrine bodies in our body (Figure 19.1). In addition to these, some other organs, e.g., gastrointestinal tract, liver, kidney, heart also produce hormones. A brief account of the structure and functions of all major endocrine glands and hypothalamus of the human body is given in the following sections.

19.2.1 The Hypothalamus

As you know, the hypothalamus is the basal part of diencephalon, forebrain (Figure 19.1) and it regulates a wide spectrum of body functions. It contains several groups of neurosecretory cells called nuclei which produce hormones. These hormones regulate the synthesis and secretion of pituitary hormones. However, the hormones produced by hypothalamus are of two types, the releasing hormones (which stimulate secretion of pituitary hormones) and the inhibiting hormones (which inhibit secretions of pituitary hormones). For example a hypothalamic hormone called Gonadotrophin releasing hormone (GnRH) stimulates the pituitary synthesis and release of gonadotrophins. On the other hand, somatostatin from the hypothalamus inhibits the release of growth hormone from the pituitary. These hormones originating in the hypothalamic neurons, pass through axons and are released from their nerve endings. These hormones reach the pituitary gland through a portal circulatory system and regulate the functions of the anterior pituitary. The posterior pituitary is under the direct neural regulation of the hypothalamus (Figure 19.2).

19.2.2 The Pituitary Gland

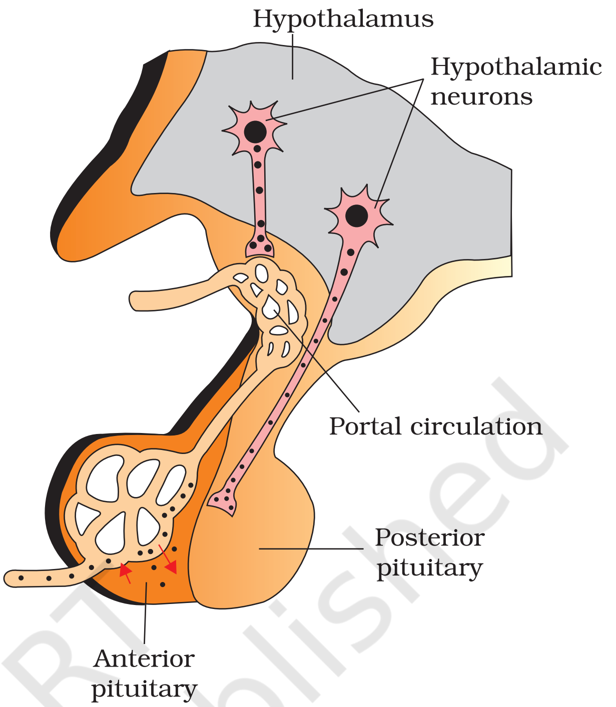


Figure 19.2 Diagrammatic representation of pituitary and its relationship with hypothalamus

The pituitary gland is located in a bony cavity called sella tursica and is attached to hypothalamus by a stalk (Figure 19.2). It is divided anatomically into an **adenohypophysis** and a **neurohypophysis**. Adenohypophysis consists of two portions, pars distalis and pars intermedia. The pars distalis region of pituitary, commonly called anterior pituitary, produces **growth hormone** (GH), **prolactin** (PRL), **thyroid stimulating hormone** (TSH), **adrenocorticotrophic hormone** (ACTH), **luteinizing hormone** (LH) and **follicle stimulating hormone** (FSH). Pars intermedia secretes only one hormone called **melanocyte stimulating hormone** (MSH). However, in humans, the pars intermedia is almost merged with pars distalis. Neurohypophysis (pars nervosa) also known as posterior pituitary, stores and releases two hormones called **oxytocin** and **vasopressin,** which are actually synthesised by the hypothalamus and are transported axonally to neurohypophysis.

Over-secretion of GH stimulates abnormal growth of the body leading to gigantism and low secretion of GH results in stunted growth resulting in pituitary dwarfism. Excess secretion of growth hormone in adults especially in middle age can result in severe disfigurement (especially of the face) called **Acromegaly**, which may lead to serious complications, and premature death if unchecked. The disease is hard to diagnose in the early stages and often goes undetected for many years, until changes in external features become noticeable. Prolactin regulates the growth of the mammary glands and formation of milk in them. TSH stimulates the synthesis and secretion of thyroid hormones from the thyroid gland. ACTH stimulates the synthesis and secretion of steroid hormones called **glucocorticoids** from the adrenal cortex. LH and FSH stimulate gonadal activity and hence are called **gonadotrophins**. In males, LH stimulates the synthesis and secretion of hormones called **androgens** from testis. In males, FSH and androgens regulate spermatogenesis. In females, LH induces ovulation of fully mature follicles (graafian follicles) and maintains the corpus luteum, formed from the remnants of the graafian follicles after ovulation. FSH stimulates growth and development of the ovarian follicles in females. MSH acts on the melanocytes (melanin containing cells) and regulates pigmentation of the skin. Oxytocin acts on the smooth muscles of our body and stimulates their contraction. In females, it stimulates a vigorous contraction of uterus at the time of child birth, and milk ejection from the mammary gland. Vasopressin acts mainly at the kidney and stimulates resorption of water and electrolytes by the distal tubules and thereby reduces loss of water through urine (diuresis). Hence, it is also called as **anti-diuretic hormone** (ADH).

An impairment affecting synthesis or release of ADH results in a diminished ability of the kidney to conserve water leading to water loss and dehydration. This condition is known as **Diabetes Insipidus**.

19.2.3 The Pineal Gland

The pineal gland is located on the dorsal side of forebrain. Pineal secretes a hormone called **melatonin**. Melatonin plays a very important role in the regulation of a 24-hour (diurnal) rhythm of our body. For example, it helps in maintaining the normal rhythms of sleep-wake cycle, body temperature. In addition, melatonin also influences metabolism, pigmentation, the menstrual cycle as well as our defense capability.

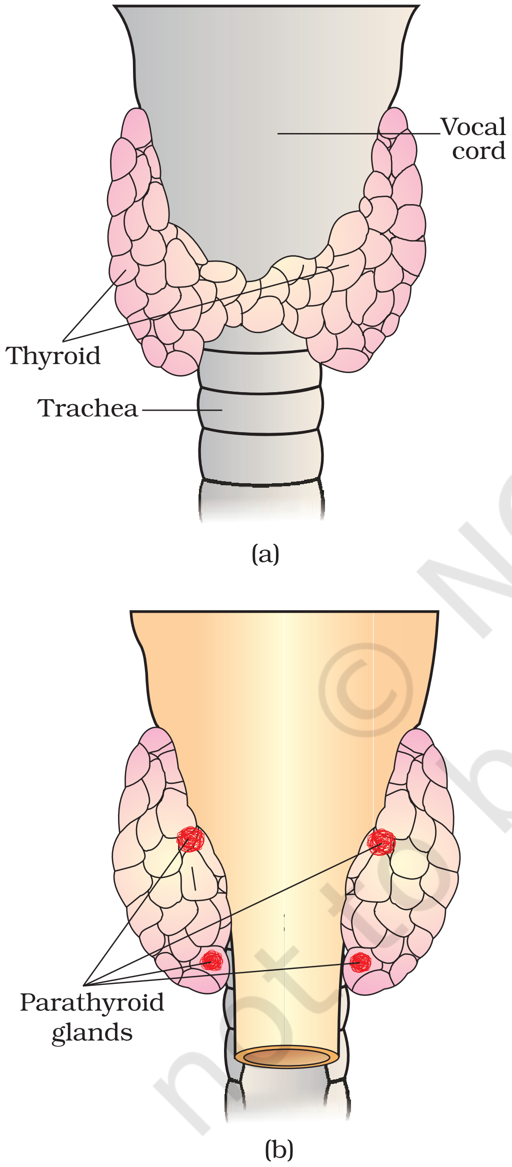


Figure 19.3 Diagrammatic view of the position of Thyroid and Parathyroid
(a) Ventral side
(b) Dorsal side

19.2.4 Thyroid Gland

The thyroid gland is composed of two lobes which are located on either side of the trachea (Figure 19.3 a). Both the lobes are interconnected with a thin flap of connective tissue called isthmus. The thyroid gland is composed of **follicles** and **stromal tissues**. Each thyroid follicle is composed of follicular cells, enclosing a cavity. These follicular cells synthesise two hormones, **tetraiodothyronine** or **thyroxine** (T_4) and **triiodothyronine** (T_3). Iodine is essential for the normal rate of hormone synthesis in the thyroid. Deficiency of iodine in our diet results in **hypothyroidism** and enlargement of the thyroid gland, commonly called **goitre**. Hypothyroidism during pregnancy causes defective development and maturation of the growing baby leading to stunted growth (cretinism), mental retardation, low intelligence quotient, abnormal skin, deaf-mutism, etc. In adult women, hypothyroidism may cause menstrual cycle to become irregular. Due to cancer of the thyroid gland or due to development of nodules of the thyroid glands, the rate of synthesis and secretion of the thyroid hormones is increased to abnormal high levels leading to a condition called **hyperthyroidism** which adversely affects the body physiology.

Exopthalmic goitre is a form of hyperthyroidism, characterised by enlargement of the thyroid gland, protrusion of the eyeballs, increased basal metabolic rate, and weight loss, also called **Graves' disease.**

Thyroid hormones play an important role in the regulation of the basal metabolic rate. These hormones also support the process of red blood cell formation. Thyroid hormones control the metabolism of carbohydrates, proteins and fats. Maintenance of water and electrolyte balance is also influenced by thyroid hormones. Thyroid gland also secretes a protein hormone called thyrocalcitonin (TCT) which regulates the blood calcium levels.

19.2.5 Parathyroid Gland

In humans, four parathyroid glands are present on the back side of the thyroid gland, one pair each in the two lobes of the thyroid gland (Figure 19.3 b). The parathyroid glands secrete a peptide hormone called **parathyroid hormone** (PTH). The secretion of PTH is regulated by the circulating levels of calcium ions.

Parathyroid hormone (PTH) increases the Ca^{2+} levels in the blood. PTH acts on bones and stimulates the process of bone resorption (dissolution/demineralisation). PTH also stimulates reabsorption of Ca^{2+} by the renal tubules and increases Ca^{2+} absorption from the digested food. It is, thus, clear that PTH is a hypercalcemic hormone, i.e., it increases the blood Ca^{2+} levels. Along with TCT, it plays a significant role in calcium balance in the body.

19.2.6 Thymus

The thymus gland is a lobular structure located between lungs behind sternum on the ventral side of aorta. The thymus plays a major role in the development of the immune system. This gland secretes the peptide hormones called **thymosins**. Thymosins play a major role in the differentiation of **T-lymphocytes**, which provide **cell-mediated immunity**. In addition, thymosins also promote production of antibodies to provide **humoral immunity**. Thymus is degenerated in old individuals resulting in a decreased production of thymosins. As a result, the immune responses of old persons become weak.

19.2.7 Adrenal Gland

Our body has one pair of adrenal glands, one above of each kidney (Figure 19.4 a). The gland is composed of two types of tissues. The centrally located tissue is called the **adrenal medulla***, and outside this lies the* **adrenal cortex** *(Figure 19.4 b).*

Underproduction of hormones by the adrenal cortex alters carbohydrate metabolism causing acute weakness and fatigue leading to a disease called **Addison's disease***.*

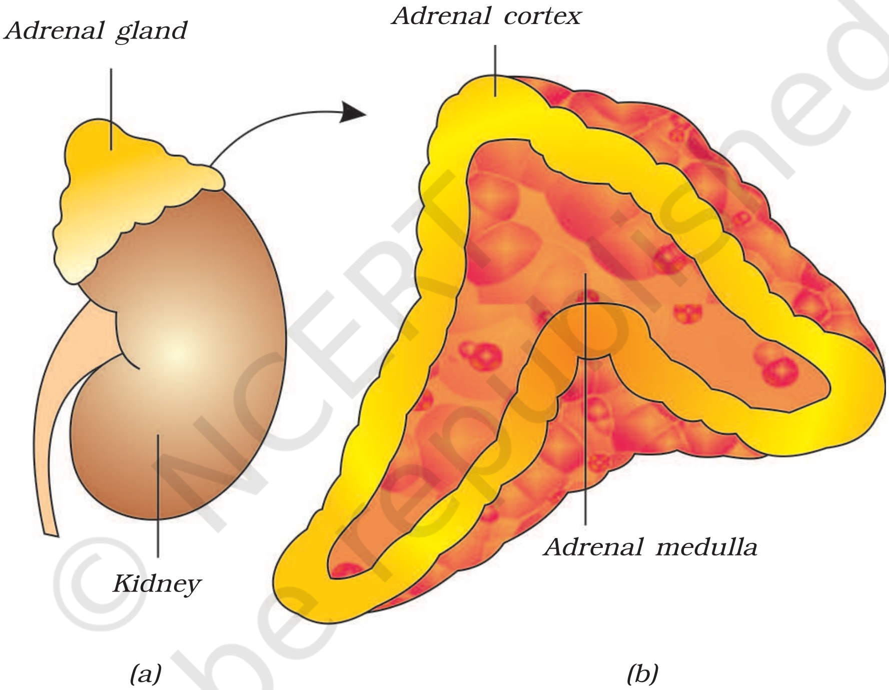


Figure 19.4 *Diagrammatic representation of : (a) Adrenal gland above kidney (b) Section showing two parts of adrenal gland*

The adrenal medulla secretes two hormones called **adrenaline** *or* **epinephrine** *and* **noradrenaline** *or* **norepinephrine***. These are commonly called as* **catecholamines***. Adrenaline and noradrenaline are rapidly secreted in response to stress of any kind and during emergency situations and are called* **emergency hormones** *or* **hormones of Fight or Flight***. These hormones increase alertness, pupilary dilation, piloerection (raising of hairs), sweating etc. Both the hormones increase the heart beat, the strength of heart contraction and the rate of respiration. Catecholamines also stimulate the breakdown of glycogen resulting in* an increased concentration of glucose in blood. In addition, they also stimulate the breakdown of lipids and proteins.

The adrenal cortex can be divided into three layers, called **zona reticularis** (inner layer), **zona fasciculata** (middle layer) and **zona glomerulosa** (outer layer). The adrenal cortex secretes many hormones, commonly called as **corticoids**. The corticoids, which are involved in carbohydrate metabolism are called glucocorticoids. In our body, cortisol is the main glucocorticoid. Corticoids, which regulate the balance of water and electrolytes in our body are called mineralocorticoids. Aldosterone is the main mineralocorticoid in our body.

Glucocorticoids stimulate gluconeogenesis, lipolysis and proteolysis; and inhibit cellular uptake and utilisation of amino acids. Cortisol is also involved in maintaining the cardio-vascular system as well as the kidney functions. Glucocorticoids, particularly cortisol, produces anti-inflammatory reactions and suppresses the immune response. Cortisol stimulates the RBC production. Aldosterone acts mainly at the renal tubules and stimulates the reabsorption of Na^+ and water and excretion of K^+ and phosphate ions. Thus, aldosterone helps in the maintenance of electrolytes, body fluid volume, osmotic pressure and blood pressure. Small amounts of androgenic steroids are also secreted by the adrenal cortex which play a role in the growth of axial hair, pubic hair and facial hair during puberty.

19.2.8 Pancreas

Pancreas is a composite gland (Figure 19.1) which acts as both exocrine and endocrine gland. The endocrine pancreas consists of 'Islets of Langerhans'. There are about 1 to 2 million Islets of Langerhans in a normal human pancreas representing only 1 to 2 per cent of the pancreatic tissue. The two main types of cells in the Islet of Langerhans are called **α-cells** and **β-cells**. The α-cells secrete a hormone called **glucagon**, while the β-cells secrete **insulin**.

Glucagon is a peptide hormone, and plays an important role in maintaining the normal blood glucose levels. Glucagon acts mainly on the liver cells (hepatocytes) and stimulates glycogenolysis resulting in an increased blood sugar (**hyperglycemia**). In addition, this hormone stimulates the process of gluconeogenesis which also contributes to hyperglycemia. Glucagon reduces the cellular glucose uptake and utilisation. Thus, glucagon is a **hyperglycemic hormone**.

Insulin is a peptide hormone, which plays a major role in the regulation of glucose homeostasis. Insulin acts mainly on hepatocytes and adipocytes (cells of adipose tissue), and enhances cellular glucose uptake and utilisation. As a result, there is a rapid movement of glucose from blood to hepatocytes and adipocytes resulting in decreased blood glucose levels (**hypoglycemia**). Insulin also stimulates conversion of glucose to glycogen (**glycogenesis**) in the target cells. The glucose homeostasis in blood is thus maintained jointly by the two – insulin and glucagons.

Prolonged hyperglycemia leads to a complex disorder called **diabetes mellitus** which is associated with loss of glucose through urine and formation of harmful compounds known as ketone bodies. Diabetic patients are successfully treated with insulin therapy.

19.2.9 Testis

A pair of testis is present in the scrotal sac (outside abdomen) of male individuals (Figure 19.1). Testis performs dual functions as a primary sex organ as well as an endocrine gland. Testis is composed of **seminiferous tubules** and **stromal or interstitial tissue.** The **Leydig cells** or **interstitial cells**, which are present in the intertubular spaces produce a group of hormones called **androgens** mainly **testosterone.**

Androgens regulate the development, maturation and functions of the male accessory sex organs like epididymis, vas deferens, seminal vesicles, prostate gland, urethra etc. These hormones stimulate muscular growth, growth of facial and axillary hair, aggressiveness, low pitch of voice etc. Androgens play a major stimulatory role in the process of spermatogenesis (formation of spermatozoa). Androgens act on the central neural system and influence the male sexual behaviour (libido). These hormones produce anabolic (synthetic) effects on protein and carbohydrate metabolism.

19.2.10 Ovary

Females have a pair of ovaries located in the abdomen (Figure 19.1). Ovary is the primary female sex organ which produces one ovum during each menstrual cycle. In addition, ovary also produces two groups of steroid hormones called **estrogen** and **progesterone**. Ovary is composed of ovarian follicles and stromal tissues. The estrogen is synthesised and secreted mainly by the growing ovarian follicles. After ovulation, the ruptured follicle is converted to a structure called **corpus luteum**, which secretes mainly **progesterone**.

Estrogens produce wide ranging actions such as stimulation of growth and activities of female secondary sex organs, development of growing ovarian follicles, appearance of female secondary sex characters (e.g., high pitch of voice, etc.) and mammary gland development. Estrogens also regulate female sexual behaviour.

Progesterone supports pregnancy. Progesterone also acts on the mammary glands and stimulates the formation of alveoli (sac-like structures which store milk) and milk secretion.

19.3 HORMONES OF HEART, KIDNEY AND GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT

Now you know about the endocrine glands and their hormones. However, as mentioned earlier, hormones are also secreted by some tissues which are not endocrine glands. For example, the atrial wall of our heart secretes a very important peptide hormone called **atrial natriuretic factor** (ANF), which decreases blood pressure. When blood pressure is increased, ANF is secreted which causes dilation of the blood vessels. This reduces the blood pressure.

The juxtaglomerular cells of kidney produce a peptide hormone called **erythropoietin** which stimulates erythropoiesis (formation of RBC).

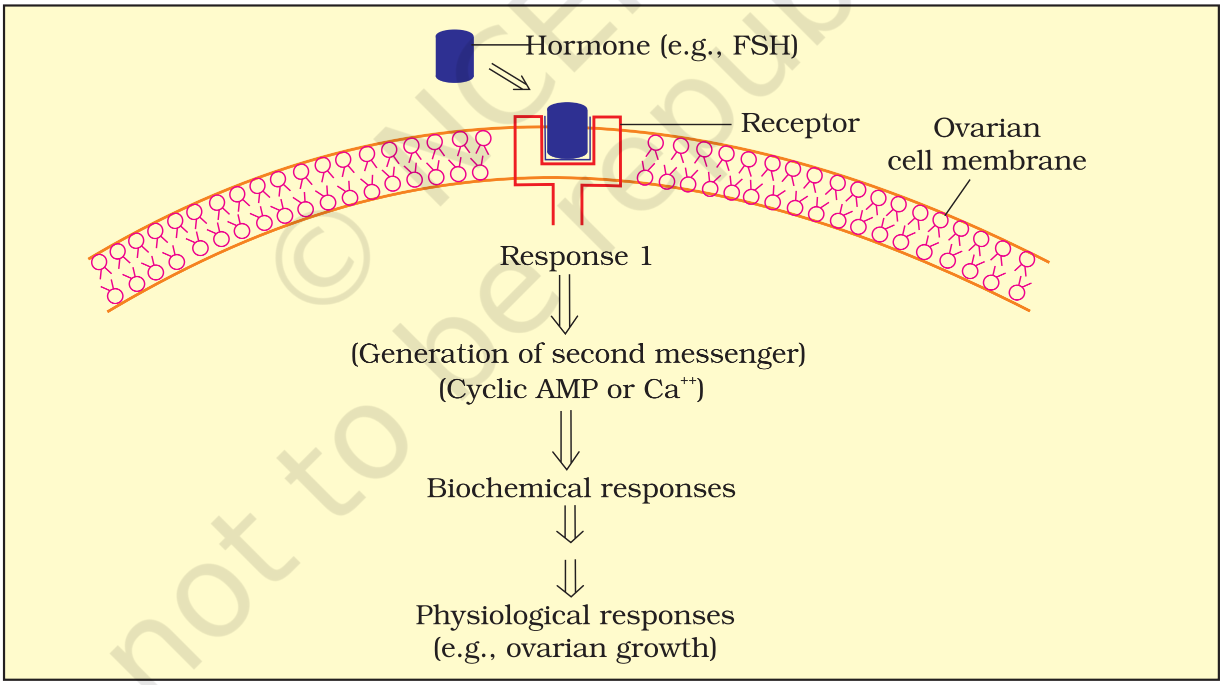
Endocrine cells present in different parts of the gastro-intestinal tract secrete four major peptide hormones, namely **gastrin**, **secretin**, **cholecystokinin** (CCK) and **gastric inhibitory peptide** (GIP). Gastrin acts on the gastric glands and stimulates the secretion of hydrochloric acid and pepsinogen. Secretin acts on the exocrine pancreas and stimulates secretion of water and bicarbonate ions. CCK acts on both pancreas and gall bladder and stimulates the secretion of pancreatic enzymes and bile juice, respectively. GIP inhibits gastric secretion and motility. Several other non-endocrine tissues secrete hormones called **growth factors.** These factors are essential for the normal growth of tissues and their repairing/regeneration.

19.4 MECHANISM OF HORMONE ACTION

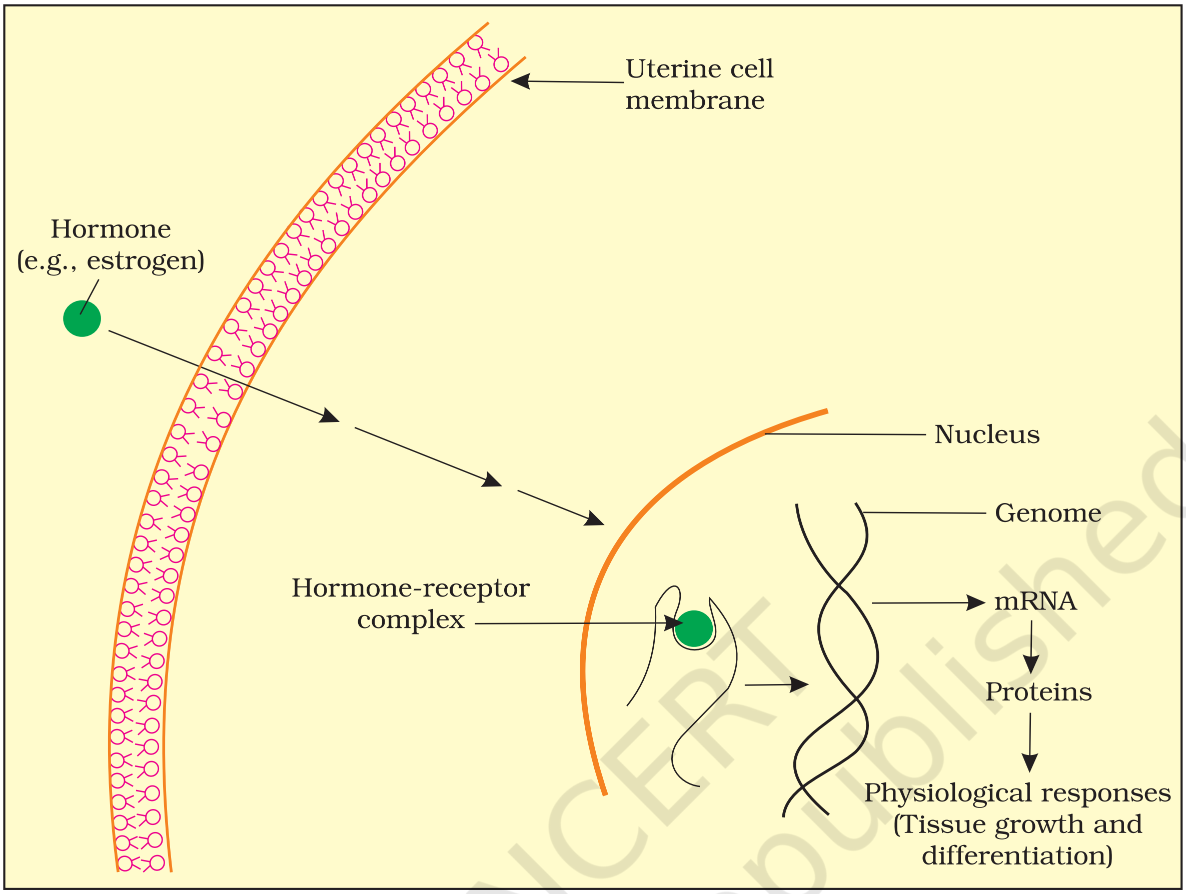
Hormones produce their effects on target tissues by binding to specific proteins called **hormone receptors** located in the target tissues only. Hormone receptors present on the cell membrane of the target cells are called membrane-bound receptors and the receptors present inside the target cell are called intracellular receptors, mostly nuclear receptors (present in the nucleus). Binding of a hormone to its receptor leads to the formation of a **hormone-receptor complex** (Figure 19.5 a, b). Each receptor is specific to one hormone only and hence receptors are specific. Hormone-Receptor complex formation leads to certain biochemical changes in the target tissue. Target tissue metabolism and hence physiological functions are regulated by hormones. On the basis of their chemical nature, hormones can be divided into groups :

(i) **peptide, polypeptide, protein hormones** (e.g., insulin, glucagon, pituitary hormones, hypothalamic hormones, etc.)
(ii) **steroids** (e.g., cortisol, testosterone, estradiol and progesterone)
(iii) **iodothyronines** (thyroid hormones)
(iv) **amino-acid derivatives** (e.g., epinephrine).

Hormones which interact with membrane-bound receptors normally do not enter the target cell, but generate second messengers (e.g., cyclic AMP, IP_3, Ca^{++} etc) which in turn regulate cellular metabolism (Figure 19.5a). Hormones which interact with intracellular receptors (e.g., steroid hormones, iodothyronines, etc.) mostly regulate gene expression or chromosome function by the interaction of hormone-receptor complex with the genome. Cumulative biochemical actions result in physiological and developmental effects (Figure 19.5b).


Hormone (e.g., FSH)
Receptor
Ovarian cell membrane
Response 1
(Generation of second messenger)
(Cyclic AMP or Ca++)
Biochemical responses
Physiological responses
(e.g., ovarian growth)

(a)


Uterine cell membrane
Hormone (e.g., estrogen)
Nucleus
Genome
mRNA
Proteins
Hormone-receptor complex
Physiological responses (Tissue growth and differentiation)

(b)

Figure 19.5 Diagramatic representation of the mechanism of hormone action : (a) Protein hormone (b) Steroid hormone

SUMMARY

There are special chemicals which act as hormones and provide chemical coordination, integration and regulation in the human body. These hormones regulate metabolism, growth and development of our organs, the endocrine glands or certain cells. The endocrine system is composed of hypothalamus, pituitary and pineal, thyroid, adrenal, pancreas, parathyroid, thymus and gonads (testis and ovary). In addition to these, some other organs, e.g., gastrointestinal tract, kidney, heart etc., also produce hormones. The pituitary gland is divided into three major parts, which are called as pars distalis, pars intermedia and pars nervosa. Pars distalis produces six trophic hormones. Pars intermedia secretes only one hormone, while pars nervosa (neurohypophysis) secretes two hormones. The pituitary hormones regulate the growth and development of somatic tissues and activities of peripheral endocrine glands. Pineal gland secretes melatonin, which plays a very important role in the regulation of 24-hour (diurnal) rhythms of our body (e.g., rhythms of sleep and state of being awake, body temperature, etc.). The thyroid gland hormones play an important role in the regulation of the basal metabolic rate, development and maturation of the central neural system, erythropoiesis, metabolism of carbohydrates, proteins and fats, menstrual cycle. Another thyroid hormone, i.e., thyrocalcitonin regulates calcium levels in our blood by decreasing it. The parathyroid glands secrete parathyroid hormone (PTH) which increases the blood Ca^{2+} levels and plays a major role in calcium homeostasis. The thymus gland secretes thymosins which play a major role in the differentiation of T-lymphocytes, which provide cell-mediated immunity. In addition, thymosins also increase the production of antibodies to provide humoral immunity. The adrenal gland is composed of the centrally located adrenal medulla and the outer adrenal cortex. The adrenal medulla secretes epinephrine and norepinephrine. These hormones increase alertness, pupilary dilation, piloerection, sweating, heart beat, strength of heart contraction, rate of respiration, glycogenolysis, lipolysis, proteolysis. The adrenal cortex secretes glucocorticoids and mineralocorticoids. Glucocorticoids stimulate gluconeogenesis, lipolysis, proteolysis, erythropoiesis, cardio-vascular system, blood pressure, and glomerular filtration rate and inhibit inflammatory reactions by suppressing the immune response. Mineralocorticoids regulate water and electrolyte contents of the body. The endocrine pancreas secretes glucagon and insulin. Glucagon stimulates glycogenolysis and gluconeogenesis resulting in hyperglycemia. Insulin stimulates cellular glucose uptake and utilisation, and glycogenesis resulting in hypoglycemia. Insulin deficiency and/or insulin resistance result in a disease called diabetes mellitus.

The testis secretes androgens, which stimulate the development, maturation and functions of the male accessory sex organs, appearance of the male secondary sex characters, spermatogenesis, male sexual behaviour, anabolic pathways and erythropoiesis. The ovary secretes estrogen and progesterone. Estrogen stimulates growth and development of female accessory sex organs and secondary sex characters. Progesterone plays a major role in the maintenance of pregnancy as well as in mammary gland development and lactation. The atrial wall of the heart produces atrial natriuretic factor which decreases the blood pressure. Kidney produces erythropoietin which stimulates erythropoiesis. The gastrointestinal tract secretes gastrin, secretin, cholecystokinin and gastric inhibitory peptide. These hormones regulate the secretion of digestive juices and help in digestion.

EXERCISES

1. Define the following:
    (a) Exocrine gland
    (b) Endocrine gland
    (c) Hormone
2. Diagrammatically indicate the location of the various endocrine glands in our body.
3. List the hormones secreted by the following:
    (a) Hypothalamus (b) Pituitary (c) Thyroid (d) Parathyroid
    (e) Adrenal (f) Pancreas (g) Testis (h) Ovary
    (i) Thymus (j) Atrium (k) Kidney (l) G-I Tract
4. Fill in the blanks:

Hormones	**Target gland**
(a) Hypothalamic hormones	___________________
(b) Thyrotrophin (TSH)	___________________
(c) Corticotrophin (ACTH)	___________________
(d) Gonadotrophins (LH, FSH)	___________________
(e) Melanotrophin (MSH)	___________________

5. Write short notes on the functions of the following hormones:
    (a) Parathyroid hormone (PTH) (b) Thyroid hormones
    (c) Thymosins (d) Androgens
    (e) Estrogens (f) Insulin and Glucagon
6. Give example(s) of:
    (a) Hyperglycemic hormone and hypoglycemic hormone
    (b) Hypercalcemic hormone
    (c) Gonadotrophic hormones
    (d) Progestational hormone
    (e) Blood pressure lowering hormone
    (f) Androgens and estrogens
7. Which hormonal deficiency is responsible for the following:
    (a) Diabetes mellitus (b) Goitre (c) Cretinism
8. Briefly mention the mechanism of action of FSH.
9. Match the following:

Column I	**Column II**
(a) T_4	(i) Hypothalamus
(b) PTH	(ii) Thyroid
(c) GnRH	(iii) Pituitary
(d) LH	(iv) Parathyroid

NOTE

BIOLOGY

TEXTBOOK FOR CLASS XII

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FOREWORD

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005, recommends that children's life at school must be linked to their life outside the school. This principle marks a departure from the legacy of bookish learning which continues to shape our system and causes a gap between the school, home and community. The syllabi and textbooks developed on the basis of NCF signify an attempt to implement this basic idea. They also attempt to discourage rote learning and the maintenance of sharp boundaries between different subject areas. We hope these measures will take us significantly further in the direction of a child-centred system of education outlined in the National Policy on Education (1986).

The success of this effort depends on the steps that school principals and teachers will take to encourage children to reflect on their own learning and to pursue imaginative activities and questions. We must recognise that, given space, time and freedom, children generate new knowledge by engaging with the information passed on to them by adults. Treating the prescribed textbook as the sole basis of examination is one of the key reasons why other resources and sites of learning are ignored. Inculcating creativity and initiative is possible if we perceive and treat children as participants in learning, not as receivers of a fixed body of knowledge.

These aims imply considerable change in school routines and mode of functioning. Flexibility in the daily time-table is as necessary as rigour in implementing the annual calendar so that the required number of teaching days are actually devoted to teaching. The methods used for teaching and evaluation will also determine how effective this textbook proves for making children's life at school a happy experience, rather than a source of stress or boredom. Syllabus designers have tried to address the problem of curricular burden by restructuring and reorienting knowledge at different stages with greater consideration for child psychology and the time available for teaching. The textbook attempts to enhance this endeavour by giving higher priority and space to opportunities for contemplation and wondering, discussion in small groups, and activities requiring hands-on experience.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) appreciates the hard work done by the textbook development committee responsible for this book. We wish to thank the Chairperson of the advisory group in science and mathematics, Professor J.V. Narlikar and the Chief Advisor for this book, Professor K. Muralidhar, Department of Zoology, University of Delhi, Delhi for guiding the work of this committee. Several teachers contributed to the development of this textbook. We are grateful to their principals for making this possible. We are indebted to the institutions and organisations which have generously permitted us to draw upon their resources, material and personnel. We are especially grateful to the members of the National Monitoring Committee, appointed by the Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development under the Chairmanship of Professor Mrinal Miri and Professor G.P. Deshpande, for their valuable time and contribution.

As an organisation committed to systemic reform and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, NCERT welcomes comments and suggestions which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinement.

Director
National Council of Educational
Research and Training

New Delhi
20 November 2006

RATIONALISATION OF CONTENT IN THE TEXTBOOK

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative to reduce content load on students. The National Education Policy 2020, also emphasises reducing the content load and providing opportunities for experiential learning with creative mindset. In this background, the NCERT has undertaken the exercise to rationalise the textbooks across all classes. Learning Outcomes already developed by the NCERT across classes have been taken into consideration in this exercise.

Contents of the textbooks have been rationalised in view of the following:

- Overlapping with similar content included in other subject areas in the same class
- Similar content included in the lower or higher class in the same subject
- Difficulty level
- Content, which is easily accessible to students without much interventions from teachers and can be learned by children through self-learning or peer-learning
- Content, which is irrelevant in the present context

This present edition, is a reformatted version after carrying out the changes given above.

THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a [1]**[SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC]** and to secure to all its citizens :

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the [2][unity and integrity of the Nation];

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949 do **HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.**

---

1. Subs. by the Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976, Sec.2, for "Sovereign Democratic Republic" (w.e.f. 3.1.1977)
2. Subs. by the Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976, Sec.2, for "Unity of the Nation" (w.e.f. 3.1.1977)

PREFACE

Biology is the study of life in its entirety. The growth of biology as a natural science during the last 1000 years is interesting from many points of view. One feature of this growth is changing emphasis. Initially it was description of life forms. Identification, nomenclature, classification of all recorded living forms enjoyed the attention of scientists for a long time. Description of their habitats and (in the case of animals) their behaviour was included in this study. In later years, the focus was physiology and internal morphology or anatomy. Darwinian ideas of evolution by natural selection changed the perception completely. Classical descriptive and clueless biology found a theoretical framework in the evolutionary theory of Darwin.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Physics and Chemistry were applied to Biology and the new science of Biochemistry soon became the dominant face of biology. On one hand Biochemistry was integrating with Physiology, becoming almost synonymous with it. On the other hand it gave rise to Structural Biology (structure of biomacromolecules), originally called Molecular Biology. The work of Bernal, Pauling, Watson and Crick, Hodgkins, Perutz and Kendrew, Delbruck, Luria, Monod, Beadle and Tatum, Lederberg, Brenner, Benzer, Nirenberg, Khorana, Mclintock, Sanger, Cohen, Boyer, Kornbergs (father and son), Leder, Chambon and scores of others brought in and established a modern version of Molecular Biology dealing with life processes at molecular level.

Physics and Chemistry dominated public perception of science for a long time. Daytoday life of man was influenced by developments in Physics, Chemistry and their respective manufacturing industries. Slowly and steadily, Biology, not to be left behind, demonstrated its utility for human welfare. Medical practice, especially diagnostics, green revolution and the newly emerging biotechnology and its success stories made the presence of biology felt by the common man. Patent laws brought biology into political domain and commercial value of biology became obvious.

For more than a century, classical and so-called reductionist biology fought artifical battles. The fact is both are important. Ecology brought in synthesis of both approaches and emphasised integrated understanding of biology. Form and process are both equally important. Systems biology, using mathematical tools, is bringing about a modern synthesis of both the aspects of Biology.

The Class XI and XII textbooks in biology essentially were to reflect these threads of biological thought. While the Class XI book dealt with morphology, taxonomy, molecular and cellular aspects of physiology, the Class XII book deals with the physiological process of reproduction in flowering plants and humans, the principles of inheritance, the nature of genetic material and its function, the contributions of biology to human welfare, basic principles of biotechnological processes and their applications and achievements. The Class XII book also relates genes to evolution on one hand and presents ecological interactions, behaviour of populations and ecosystems on the other. Most important, the guidelines under NCF-2005 have been followed in letter and spirit. The total learning load has been reduced considerably and themes like environmental issues, adolescent problems and reproductive health have been dealt with in some detail. Studied together, the class XI and class XII textbooks in Biology would enable the student to —

(i) become familiar with the diversity of biological material.
(ii) appreciate and believe in the Darwinian evolutionary process exhibited by the living world.
(iii) understand the dynamic state of constituents of living bodies, i.e., metabolic basis of all physiological processes in plants, animals and microbes.
(iv) realise the structure and function of genetic material in directing the inherited phenotype pattern as well as a mediator of evolutionary process.
(v) appreciate the profound contributions of biology to human welfare.
(vi) reflect on the physico-chemical basis of living processes and at the same time realise the limitation of reductionism in understanding behaviour of organisms.
(vii) experience the humbling effect of this realisation that all living organisms are related to each other by virtue of shared genetic material.
(viii) realise that biology is the story of the struggle of living organisms for existence and survival.

One may notice a perceptible change in the writing style. Most of the chapters are written in an easy dialogue style engaging the student constantly while some chapters are in the form of critical comments on the subject matter. A number of questions have been provided at the end of each chapter though answers to some may not be found in the text. Students have to read supplementary material, upon advise from the teacher, to answer such questions.

I am thankful to Professor Krishna Kumar, Director NCERT; Professor G. Ravindra, Joint Director, NCERT and Professor Hukum Singh, Head, DESM, NCERT for constant support. I must place on record my deep appreciation for Dr B.K. Tripathi, *Reader,* DESM, NCERT for his relentless efforts as coordinator in bringing out the Biology textbook for both the Class XI and XII. All the members of the development team, the experts and reviewers, and the school teachers have contributed enormously in the preparation of this book. I thank them all. I am indeed highly thankful to the members of monitoring committee constituted by Ministry of Human Resource Development for their valuable observation that helped in the improvement of the book at the final stage. The book is prepared keeping in mind the guidelines of the NCF-2005 especially the emphasis on reducing the learning load. We hope that the book would meet the expectations of all the stakeholders. All suggestions for further improvement are always welcome.

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UNIT VI

REPRODUCTION

Chapter 1
Sexual Reproduction in flowering Plants

Chapter 2
Human Reproduction

Chapter 3
Reproductive Health

Biology in essence is the story of life on earth. While individual organisms die without fail, species continue to live through millions of years unless threatened by natural or anthropogenic extinction. Reproduction becomes a vital process without which species cannot survive for long. Each individual leaves its progeny by asexual or sexual means. Sexual mode of reproduction enables creation of new variants, so that survival advantage is enhanced. This unit explains the details of reproductive processes in flowering plants and humans as easy to relate representative examples. A related perspective on human reproductive health and how reproductive ill health can be avoided is also presented to complete our understanding of biology of reproduction.

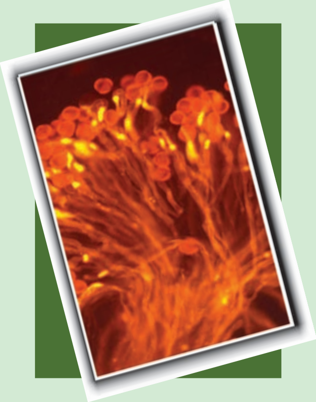
PANCHANAN MAHESHWARI
(1904-1966)

Born in November 1904 in Jaipur (Rajasthan) Panchanan Maheshwari rose to become one of the most distinguished botanists not only of India but of the entire world. He moved to Allahabad for higher education where he obtained his D.Sc. During his college days, he was inspired by Dr W. Dudgeon, an American missionary teacher, to develop interest in Botany and especially morphology. His teacher once expressed that if his student progresses ahead of him, it will give him a great satisfaction. These words encouraged Panchanan to enquire what he could do for his teacher in return.

He worked on embryological aspects and popularised the use of embryological characters in taxonomy. He established the Department of Botany, University of Delhi as an important centre of research in embryology and tissue culture. He also emphasised the need for initiation of work on artificial culture of immature embryos. These days, tissue culture has become a landmark in science. His work on test tube fertilisation and intra-ovarian pollination won worldwide acclaim.

He was honoured with fellowship of Royal Society of London (FRS), Indian National Science Academy and several other institutions of excellence. He encouraged general education and made a significant contribution to school education by his leadership in bringing out the very first textbooks of Biology for Higher Secondary Schools published by NCERT in 1964.

CHAPTER 1



SEXUAL REPRODUCTION IN FLOWERING PLANTS

1.1 Flower – A Fascinating Organ of Angiosperms
1.2 Pre-fertilisation : Structures and Events
1.3 Double Fertilisation
1.4 Post-fertilisation: Structures and Events
1.5 Apomixis and Polyembryony

Are we not lucky that plants reproduce sexually? The myriads of flowers that we enjoy gazing at, the scents and the perfumes that we swoon over, the rich colours that attract us, are all there as an aid to sexual reproduction. Flowers do not exist only for us to be used for our own selfishness. All flowering plants show sexual reproduction. A look at the diversity of structures of the inflorescences, flowers and floral parts, shows an amazing range of adaptations to ensure formation of the end products of sexual reproduction, the fruits and seeds. In this chapter, let us understand the morphology, structure and the processes of sexual reproduction in flowering plants (angiosperms).

1.1 FLOWER – A FASCINATING ORGAN OF ANGIOSPERMS

Human beings have had an intimate relationship with flowers since time immemorial. Flowers are objects of aesthetic, ornamental, social, religious and cultural value – they have always been used as symbols for conveying important human feelings such as love, affection, happiness, grief, mourning, etc. *List at least five flowers of ornamental value that are commonly cultivated at*

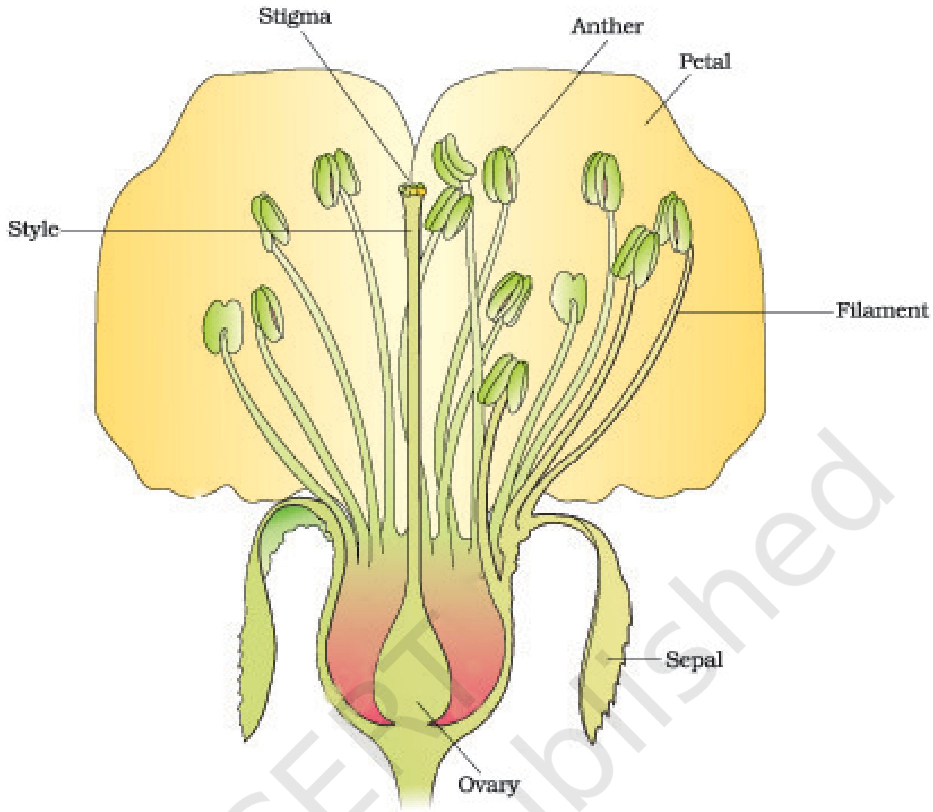


Figure 1.1 A diagrammatic representation of L.S. of a flower

homes and in gardens. Find out the names of five more flowers that are used in social and cultural celebrations in your family. Have you heard of floriculture – what does it refer to?

To a biologist, flowers are morphological and embryological marvels and the sites of sexual reproduction. In earlier classes, you have read the various parts of a flower. Figure 1.1 will help you recall the parts of a typical flower. Can you name the two parts in a flower in which the two most important units of sexual reproduction develop?

1.2 PRE-FERTILISATION: STRUCTURES AND EVENTS

Much before the actual flower is seen on a plant, the decision that the plant is going to flower has taken place. Several hormonal and structural changes are initiated which lead to the differentiation and further development of the floral primordium. Inflorescences are formed which bear the floral buds and then the flowers. In the flower the male and female reproductive structures, the androecium and the gynoecium differentiate and develop. You would recollect that the androecium consists of a whorl of stamens representing the male reproductive organ and the gynoecium represents the female reproductive organ.

1.2.1 Stamen, Microsporangium and Pollen Grain

Figure 1.2a shows the two parts of a typical **stamen –** the long and slender stalk called the **filament,** and the terminal generally bilobed structure called the **anther.** The proximal end of the filament is attached to the thalamus or the petal of the flower. The number and length of stamens are variable in flowers of different species. If you were to collect a stamen each from ten flowers (each from different species) and arrange them on a slide, you would be able to appreciate the large variation in size seen in nature. Careful observation of each stamen under a dissecting microscope and making neat diagrams would elucidate the range in shape and attachment of anthers in different flowers.

A typical angiosperm anther is **bilobed** with each lobe having two theca, i.e., they are **dithecous** (Figure 1.2b). Often a longitudinal groove runs lengthwise separating the theca. Let us understand the various types of tissues and their organisation in the transverse section of an anther (Figure 1.3a). The bilobed nature of an anther is very distinct in the transverse section of the anther. The anther is a four-sided (tetragonal) structure consisting of four **microsporangia** located at the corners, two in each lobe.

The microsporangia develop further and become **pollen sacs.** They extend longitudinally all through the length of an anther and are packed with pollen grains.

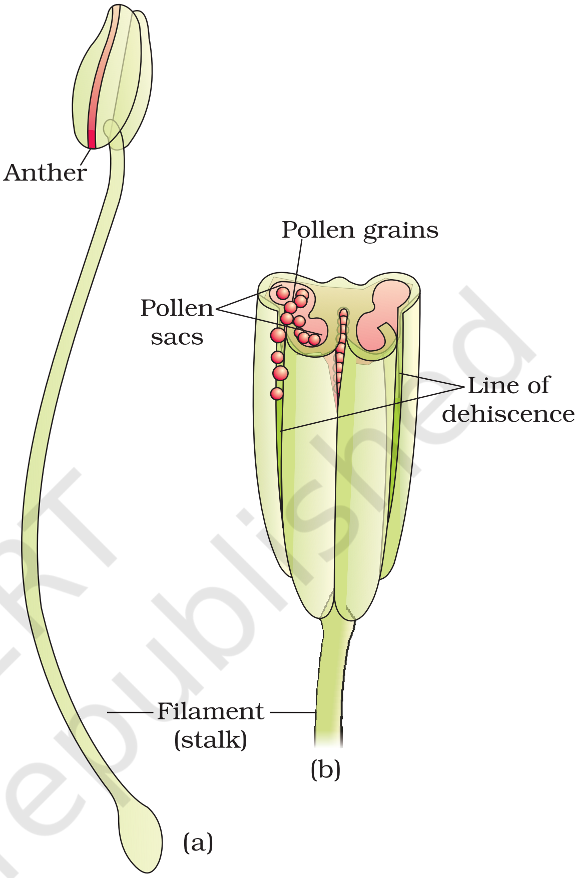


Figure 1.2 (a) A typical stamen; (b) three–dimensional cut section of an anther

Structure of microsporangium: In a transverse section, a typical microsporangium appears near circular in outline. It is generally surrounded by four wall layers (Figure 1.3b)– the epidermis, endothecium, middle layers and the tapetum. The outer three wall layers perform the function of protection and help in dehiscence of anther to release the pollen. The innermost wall layer is the **tapetum.** It nourishes the developing pollen grains. Cells of the tapetum possess dense cytoplasm and generally have more than one nucleus. *Can you think of how tapetal cells could become bi-nucleate?*

When the anther is young, a group of compactly arranged homogenous cells called the **sporogenous tissue** occupies the centre of each microsporangium.

Microsporogenesis : As the anther develops, the cells of the sporogenous tissue undergo meiotic divisions to form microspore tetrads. *What would be the ploidy of the cells of the tetrad?*

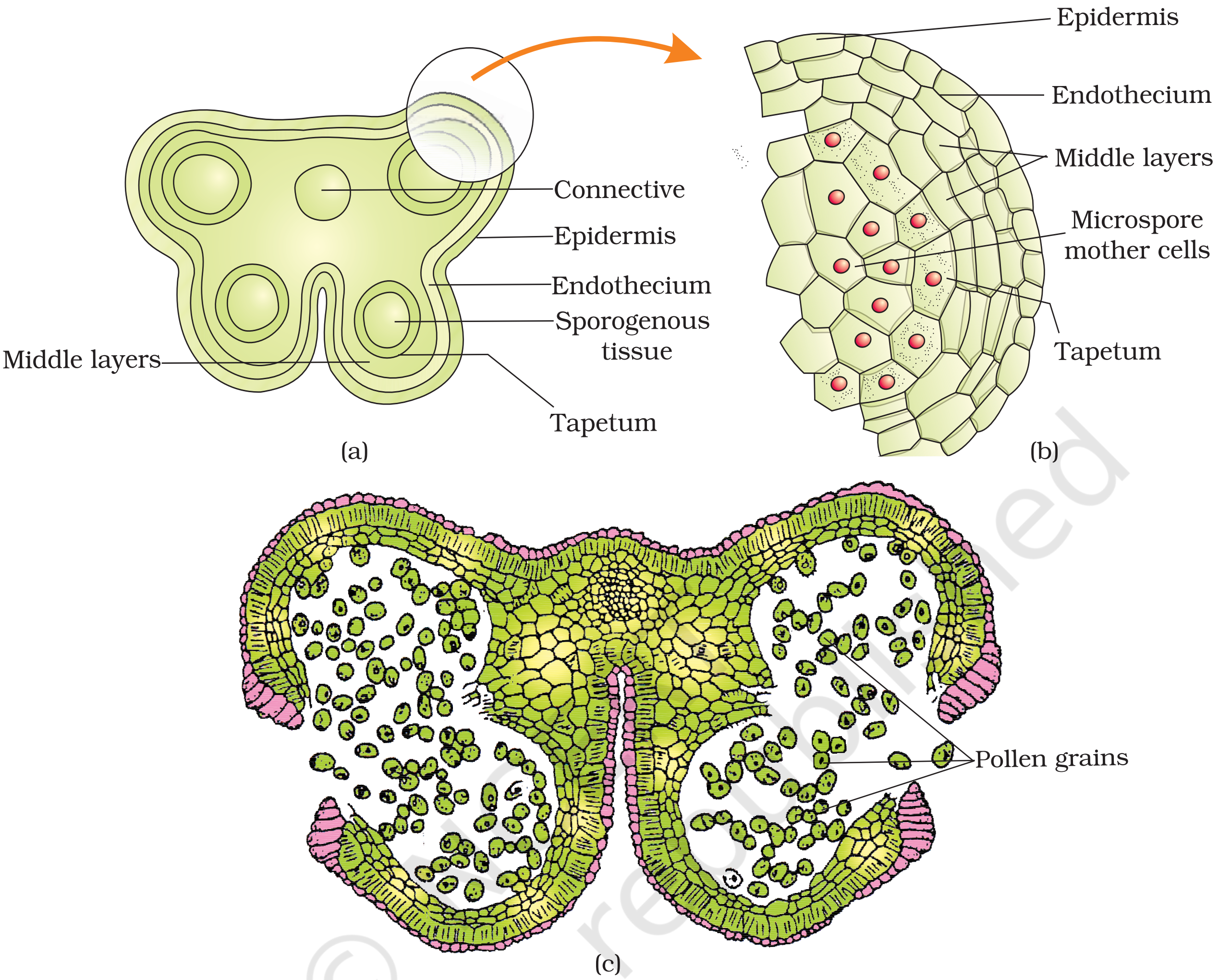

Connective
Epidermis
Endothecium
Sporogenous tissue
Middle layers
Tapetum
(a)
Epidermis
Endothecium
Middle layers
Microspore mother cells
Tapetum
(b)
Pollen grains
(c)

Figure 1.3 (a) Transverse section of a young anther; (b) Enlarged view of one microsporangium showing wall layers; (c) A mature dehisced anther

As each cell of the sporogenous tissue is capable of giving rise to a microspore tetrad. Each one is a potential pollen or microspore mother cell. The process of formation of microspores from a pollen mother cell (PMC) through meiosis is called **microsporogenesis.** The microspores, as they are formed, are arranged in a cluster of four cells–the **microspore tetrad** (Figure 1.3a). As the anthers mature and dehydrate, the microspores dissociate from each other and develop into **pollen grains** (Figure 1.3 b). Inside each microsporangium several thousands of microspores or pollen grains are formed that are released with the dehiscence of anther (Figure 1.3c).

Pollen grain: The pollen grains represent the male gametophytes. If you touch the opened anthers of *Hibiscus* or any other flower you would find deposition of yellowish powdery pollen grains on your fingers. Sprinkle these grains on a drop of water taken on a glass slide and observe under

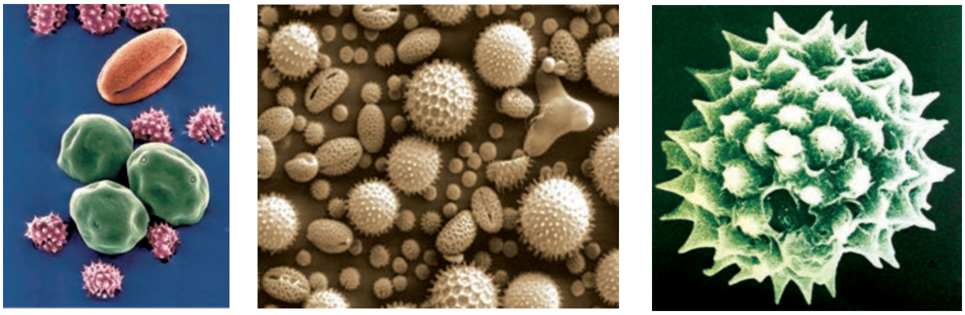


Figure 1.4 Scanning electron micrographs of a few pollen grains

a microscope. You will really be amazed at the variety of architecture – sizes, shapes, colours, designs – seen on the pollen grains from different species (Figure 1.4).

Pollen grains are generally spherical measuring about 25-50 micrometers in diameter. It has a prominent two-layered wall. The hard outer layer called the **exine** is made up of sporopollenin which is one of the most resistant organic material known. It can withstand high temperatures and strong acids and alkali. No enzyme that degrades sporopollenin is so far known. Pollen grain exine has prominent apertures called **germ pores** where sporopollenin is absent. Pollen grains are well-preserved as fossils because of the presence of sporopollenin. The exine exhibits a fascinating array of patterns and designs. *Why do you think the exine should be hard? What is the function of germ pore?* The inner wall of the pollen grain is called the **intine.** It is a thin and continuous layer made up of cellulose and pectin. The cytoplasm of pollen grain is surrounded by a plasma membrane. When the pollen grain is mature it contains two cells, the **vegetative cell** and **generative cell** (Figure 1.5b)**.** The vegetative cell is bigger, has abundant food reserve and a large irregularly shaped nucleus. The **generative cell** is small and floats in the cytoplasm of the vegetative cell. It is spindle shaped with dense cytoplasm and a nucleus. In over 60 per cent of angiosperms, pollen grains are shed at this 2-celled stage. In the remaining species, the generative cell divides mitotically to give rise to the two male gametes before pollen grains are shed (3-celled stage).

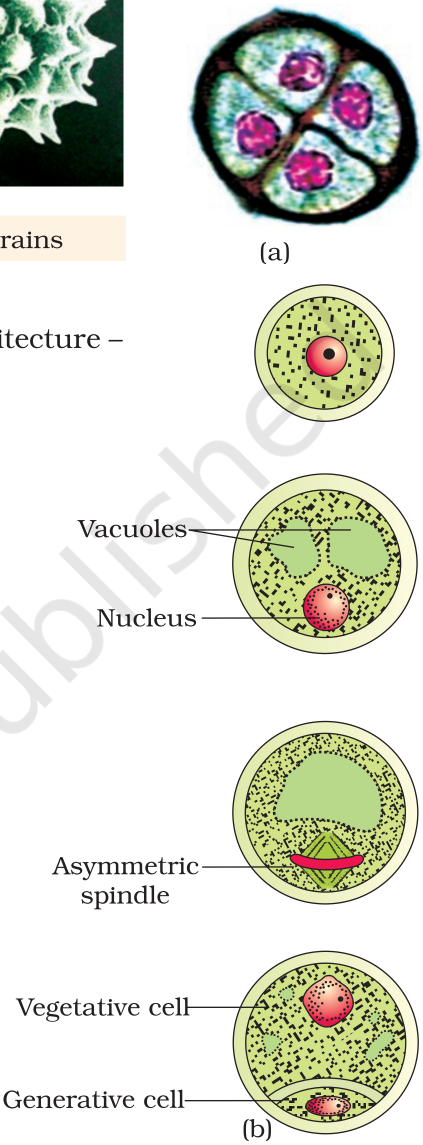


Figure 1.5 (a) Enlarged view of a pollen grain tetrad; (b) stages of a microspore maturing into a pollen grain

Pollen grains of many species cause severe allergies and bronchial afflictions in some people often leading to chronic respiratory disorders – asthma, bronchitis, etc. It may be mentioned that *Parthenium* or carrot grass that came into India as a contaminant with imported wheat, has become ubiquitous in occurrence and causes pollen allergy.

Pollen grains are rich in nutrients. It has become a fashion in recent years to use pollen tablets as food supplements. In western countries, a large number of pollen products in the form of tablets and syrups are available in the market. Pollen consumption has been claimed to increase the performance of athletes and race horses (Figure 1.6).

Pollen Products
THE ENERGY SHAKE
VANILLA
Bee Pollen Cream
Bee Pollen Flower Extract
Bee Pollen
30 TABLETS
Bee Pollen
from England
Natural Bee- collected Pollen
in Tiny Golden Pods
A natural food from honey bees
NET WEIGHT .45 OZ.
30 DAYS

Figure 1.6 Pollen products

When once they are shed, pollen grains have to land on the stigma before they lose viability if they have to bring about fertilisation. How long do you think the pollen grains retain viability? The period for which pollen grains remain viable is highly variable and to some extent depends on the prevailing temperature and humidity. In some cereals such as rice and wheat, pollen grains lose viability within 30 minutes of their release, and in some members of Rosaceae, Leguminoseae and Solanaceae, they maintain viability for months. You may have heard of storing semen/ sperms of many animals including humans for artificial insemination. It is possible to store pollen grains of a large number of species for years in liquid nitrogen (-196^{0}C). Such stored pollen can be used as pollen banks, similar to seed banks, in crop breeding programmes.

1.2.2 The Pistil, Megasporangium (ovule) and Embryo sac

The gynoecium represents the female reproductive part of the flower. The gynoecium may consist of a single pistil (**monocarpellary**) or may have more than one pistil (**multicarpellary**). When there are more than one, the pistils may be fused together (**syncarpous**) (Figure 1.7b) or may be free (**apocarpous**) (Figure 1.7c). Each pistil has three parts (Figure 1.7a), **the stigma, style and ovary**. The **stigma** serves as a landing platform for pollen grains. The style is the elongated slender part beneath the stigma. The basal bulged part of the pistil is the **ovary.** Inside the ovary is the **ovarian cavity (locule)**. **The placenta** is located inside the ovarian cavity. Recall the definition and types of placentation that you studied in

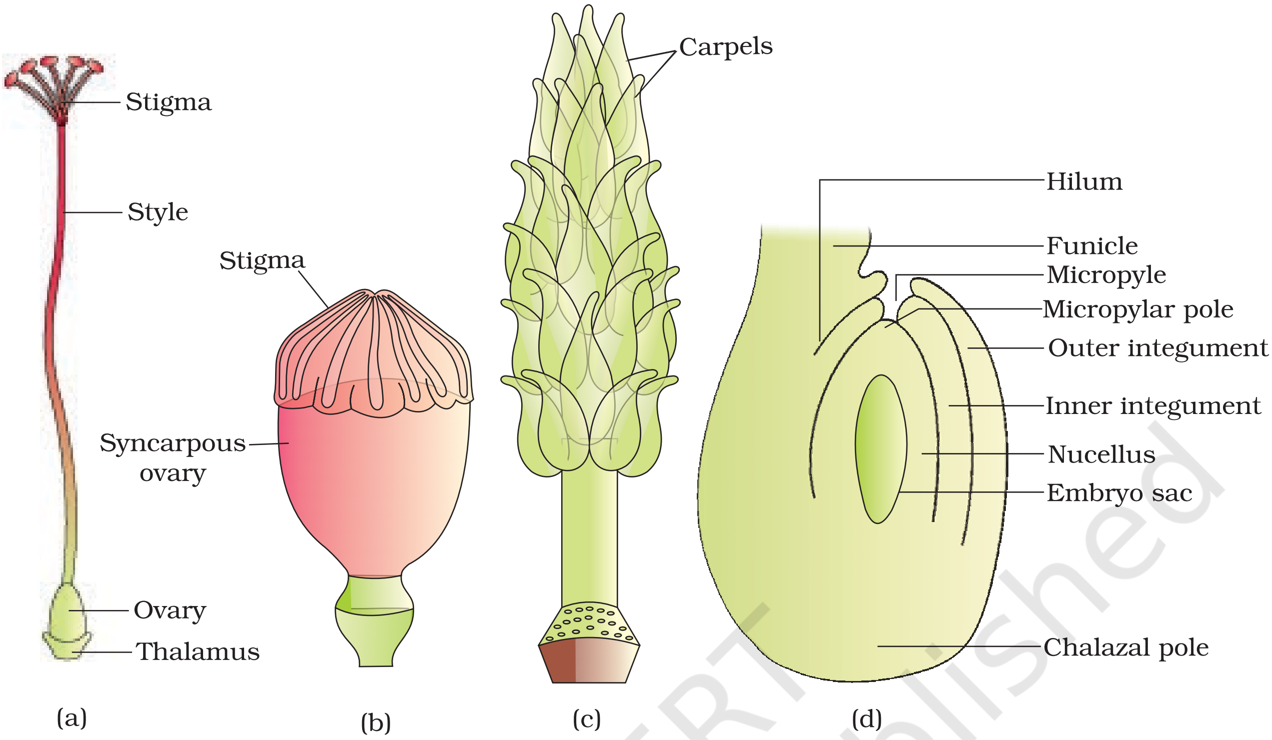

Stigma
Style
Ovary
Thalamus
(a)
Stigma
Syncarpous ovary
(b)
Carpels
(c)
Hilum
Funicle
Micropyle
Micropylar pole
Outer integument
Inner integument
Nucellus
Embryo sac
Chalazal pole
(d)

Figure 1.7 (a) A dissected flower of *Hibiscus* showing pistil (other floral parts have been removed); (b) Multicarpellary, syncarpous pistil of *Papaver*; (c) A multicarpellary, apocarpous gynoecium of *Michelia*; (d) A diagrammatic view of a typical anatropous ovule

Class XI. Arising from the placenta are the **megasporangia,** commonly called **ovules.** The number of ovules in an ovary may be one (wheat, paddy, mango) to many (papaya, water melon, orchids).

The Megasporangium (Ovule) : Let us familiarise ourselves with the structure of a typical angiosperm ovule (Figure 1.7d). The ovule is a small structure attached to the placenta by means of a stalk called **funicle**. The body of the ovule fuses with funicle in the region called **hilum.** Thus, hilum represents the junction between ovule and funicle. Each ovule has one or two protective envelopes called **integuments.** Integuments encircle the nucellus except at the tip where a small opening called the **micropyle** is organised. Opposite the micropylar end, is the **chalaza**, representing the basal part of the ovule.

Enclosed within the integuments is a mass of cells called the **nucellus**. Cells of the nucellus have abundant reserve food materials. Located in the nucellus is the **embryo sac** or **female gametophyte**. An ovule generally has a single embryo sac formed from a megaspore.

Megasporogenesis : The process of formation of megaspores from the **megaspore mother cell** is called **megasporogenesis**. Ovules generally differentiate a single megaspore mother cell (MMC) in the micropylar region

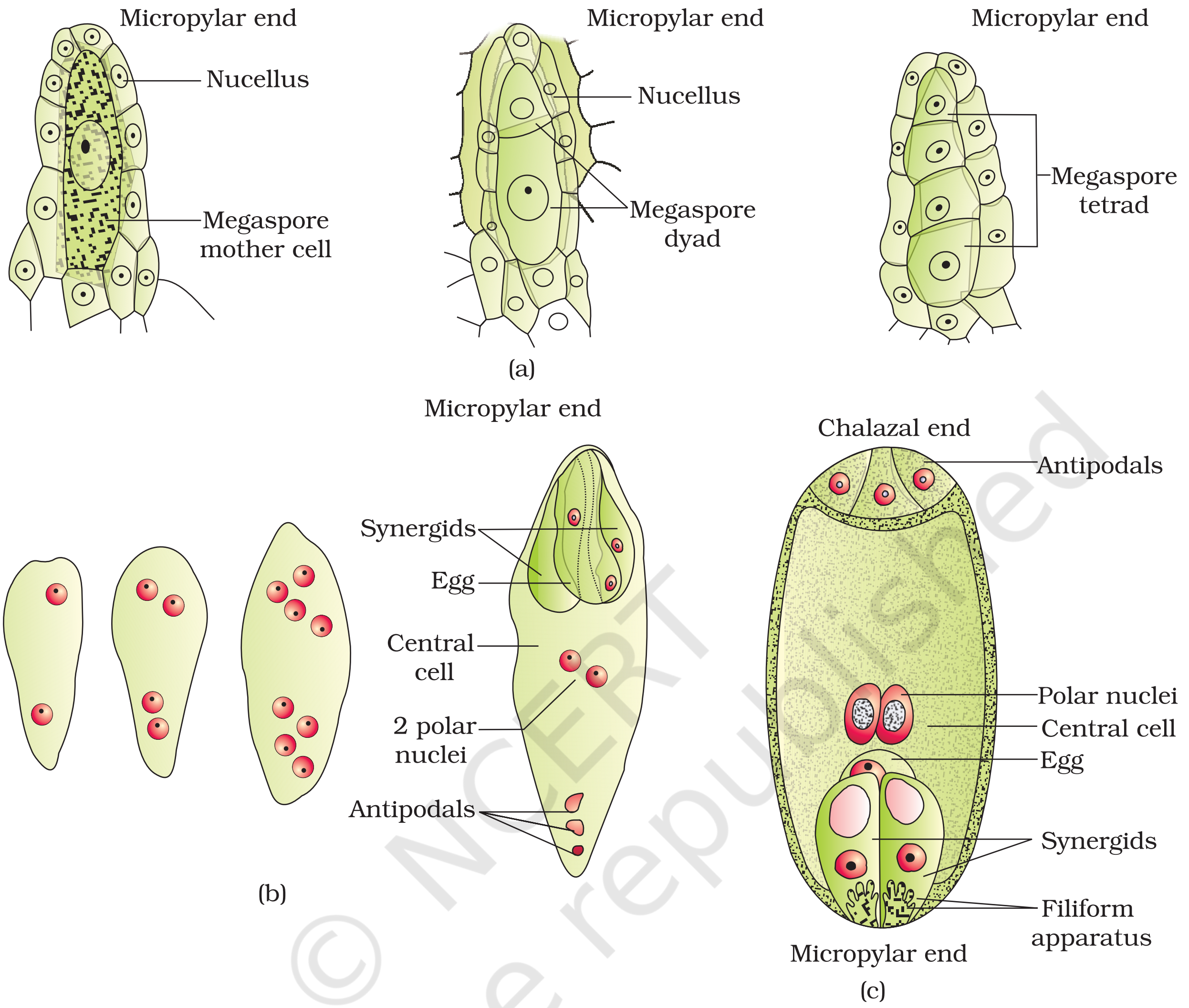

Micropylar end
Nucellus
Megaspore mother cell
Micropylar end
Nucellus
Megaspore dyad
Micropylar end
Megaspore tetrad
(a)
Micropylar end
Synergids
Egg
Central cell
2 polar nuclei
Antipodals
(b)
Chalazal end
Antipodals
Polar nuclei
Central cell
Egg
Synergids
Filiform apparatus
Micropylar end
(c)

Figure 1.8 (a) Parts of the ovule showing a large megaspore mother cell, a dyad and a tetrad of megaspores; (b) 2, 4, and 8-nucleate stages of embryo sac and a mature embryo sac; (c) A diagrammatic representation of the mature embryo sac.

of the nucellus. It is a large cell containing dense cytoplasm and a prominent nucleus. The MMC undergoes meiotic division. *What is the importance of the MMC undergoing meiosis?* Meiosis results in the production of four **megaspores** (Figure 1.8a).

Female gametophyte : In a majority of flowering plants, one of the megaspores is **functional** while the other three degenerate. Only the **functional megaspore** develops into the **female gametophyte (embryo sac).** This method of embryo sac formation from a single megaspore is termed **monosporic** development. *What will be the ploidy of the cells of the nucellus, MMC, the functional megaspore and female gametophyte?*

Let us study about the formation of the embryo sac in detail. (Figure 1.8b). The nucleus of the functional megaspore divides mitotically to form two nuclei which move to the opposite poles, forming the **2-nucleate** embryo sac. Two more sequential mitotic nuclear divisions result in the formation of the **4-nucleate** and later the **8-nucleate** stages of the embryo sac. It is of interest to note that these mitotic divisions are strictly free nuclear, that is, nuclear divisions are not followed immediately by cell wall formation. After the 8-nucleate stage, cell walls are laid down leading to the organisation of the typical **female gametophyte** or **embryo sac**. Observe the distribution of cells inside the embryo sac (Figure 1.8b, c). Six of the eight nuclei are surrounded by cell walls and organised into cells; the remaining two nuclei, called polar nuclei are situated below the egg apparatus in the large **central cell.**

There is a characteristic distribution of the cells within the embryo sac. Three cells are grouped together at the micropylar end and constitute the **egg apparatus**. The egg apparatus, in turn, consists of two **synergids** and one **egg cell**. The synergids have special cellular thickenings at the micropylar tip called filiform apparatus, which play an important role in guiding the pollen tubes into the synergid. Three cells are at the chalazal end and are called the **antipodals**. The large central cell, as mentioned earlier, has two polar nuclei. Thus, a typical angiosperm embryo sac, at maturity, though **8-nucleate** is **7-celled**.

1.2.3 Pollination

In the preceding sections you have learnt that the male and female gametes in flowering plants are produced in the pollen grain and embryo sac, respectively. As both types of gametes are non-motile, they have to be brought together for fertilisation to occur. How is this achieved?

Pollination is the mechanism to achieve this objective. Transfer of pollen grains (shed from the anther) to the stigma of a pistil is termed **pollination**. Flowering plants have evolved an amazing array of adaptations to achieve pollination. They make use of external agents to achieve pollination. *Can you list the possible external agents?*

Kinds of Pollination : Depending on the source of pollen, pollination can be divided into three types.

(i) ***Autogamy* :** In this type, pollination is achieved within the same flower. Transfer of pollen grains from the anther to the stigma of the same flower (Figure 1.9a). In a normal flower which opens and exposes the anthers and the stigma, complete autogamy is rather rare. Autogamy in such flowers requires synchrony in pollen release and stigma receptivity and also, the anthers and the stigma should

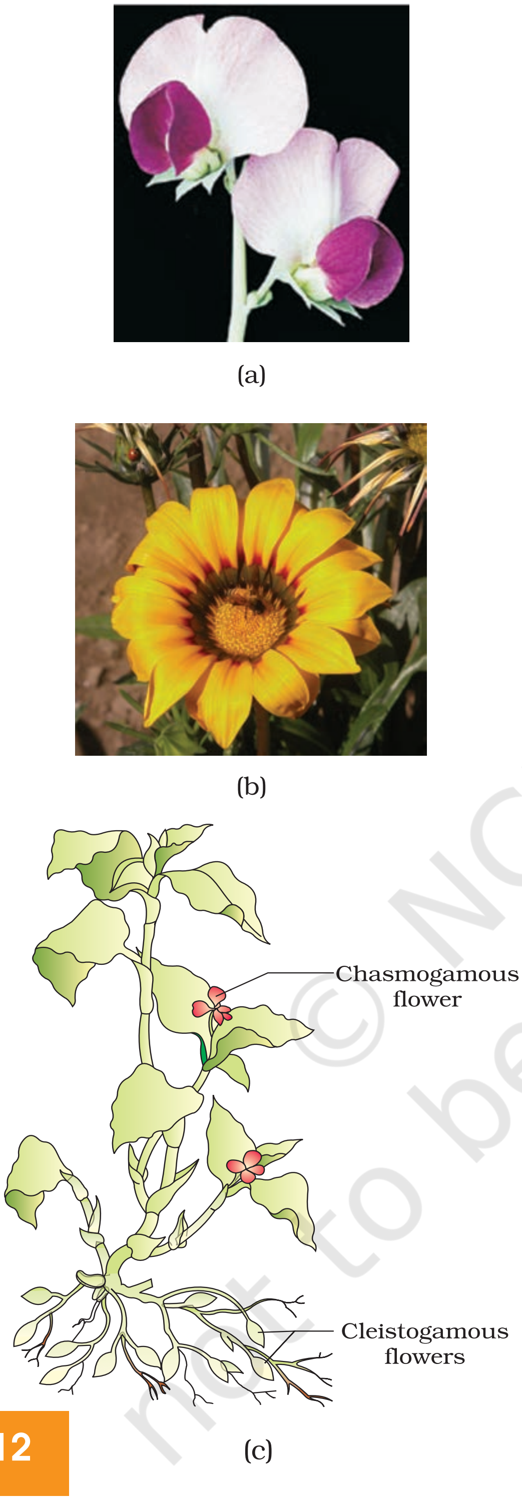


Figure 1.9 (a) Self-pollinated flowers; (b) Cross pollinated flowers; (c) Cleistogamous flowers

lie close to each other so that self-pollination can occur. Some plants such as *Viola* (common pansy), *Oxalis*, and *Commelina* produce two types of flowers – **chasmogamous** flowers which are similar to flowers of other species with exposed anthers and stigma, and **cleistogamous** flowers which do not open at all (Figure 1.9c). In such flowers, the anthers and stigma lie close to each other. When anthers dehisce in the flower buds, pollen grains come in contact with the stigma to effect pollination. Thus, cleistogamous flowers are invariably autogamous as there is no chance of cross-pollen landing on the stigma. Cleistogamous flowers produce assured seed-set even in the absence of pollinators. Do you think that cleistogamy is advantageous or disadvantageous to the plant? Why?

(ii) ***Geitonogamy*** **–** Transfer of pollen grains from the anther to the stigma of another flower of the same plant. Although geitonogamy is functionally cross-pollination involving a pollinating agent, genetically it is similar to autogamy since the pollen grains come from the same plant.

(iii) ***Xenogamy*** **–** Transfer of pollen grains from anther to the stigma of a different plant (Figure 1.9b). This is the only type of pollination which during pollination brings genetically different types of pollen grains to the stigma.

Agents of Pollination : Plants use two abiotic (wind and water) and one biotic (animals) agents to achieve pollination. Majority of plants use biotic agents for pollination. Only a small proportion of plants use abiotic agents. Pollen grains coming in contact with the stigma is a chance factor in both wind and water pollination. To compensate for this uncertainties and associated loss of pollen grains, the flowers produce enormous amount of pollen when compared to the number of ovules available for pollination.

Pollination by wind is more common amongst abiotic pollinations. Wind pollination also requires that the pollen grains are light and non-sticky so that they can be transported in wind currents. They often possess well-exposed stamens (so that the pollens are easily dispersed into wind currents, Figure 1.10) and large often-feathery stigma to easily trap air-borne pollen grains. Wind-pollinated flowers often have a single ovule in each ovary and numerous flowers packed into an inflorescence; a familiar example is the corn cob – the ears you see are nothing but the stigma and style which wave in the wind to trap pollen grains. Wind-pollination is quite common in grasses.

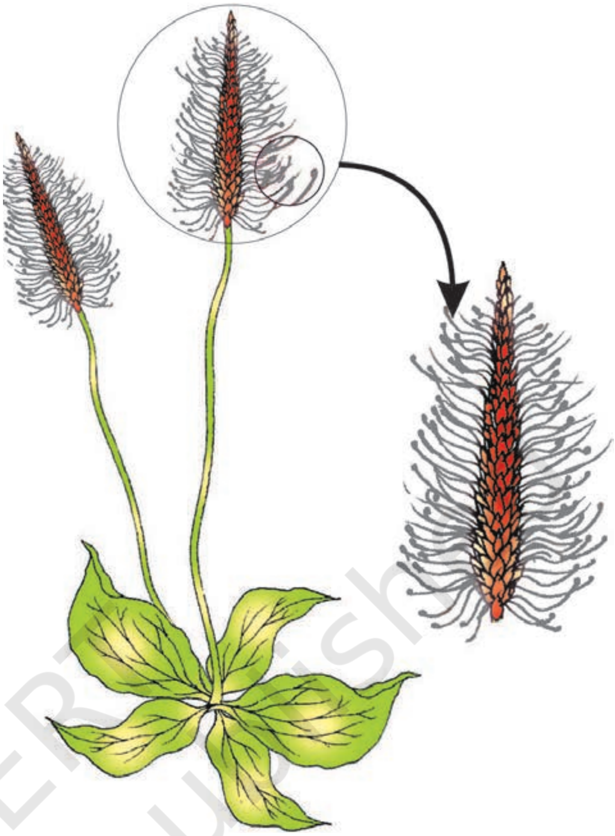


Figure 1.10 A wind-pollinated plant showing compact inflorecence and well-exposed stamens

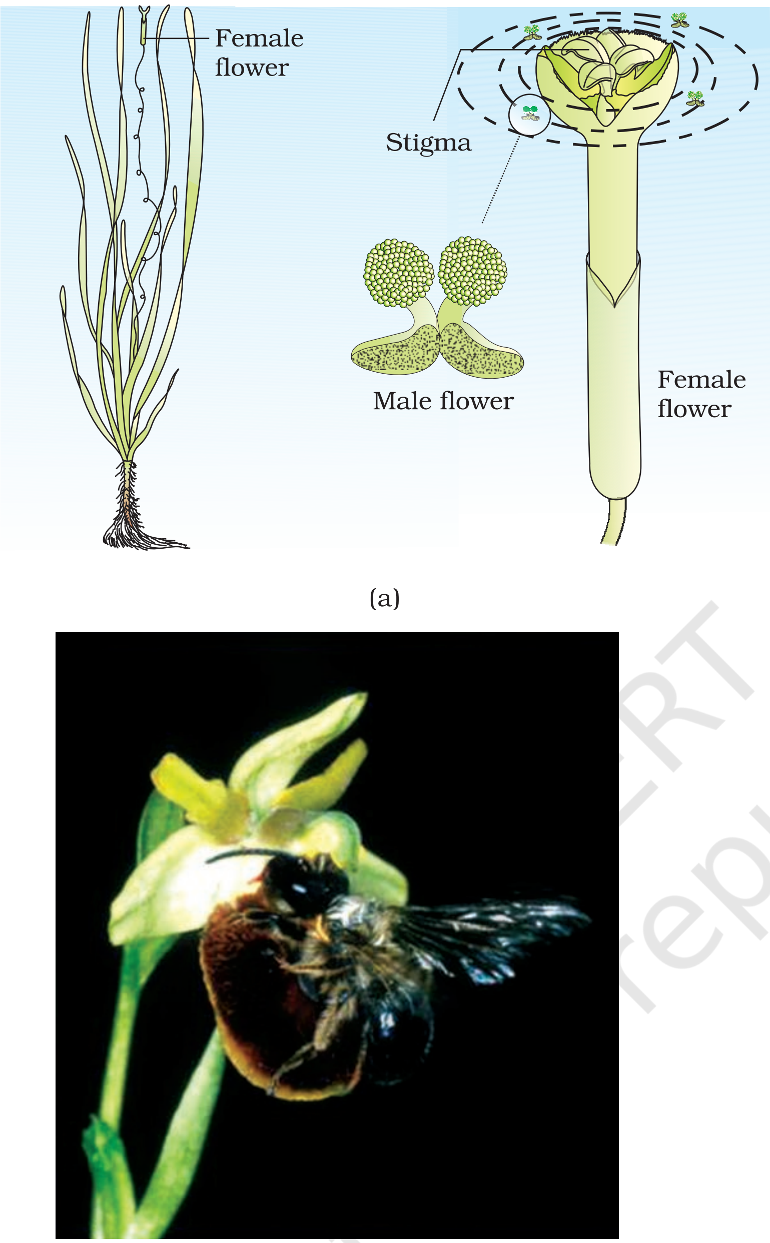
Pollination by water is quite rare in flowering plants and is limited to about 30 genera, mostly monocotyledons. As against this, you would recall that water is a regular mode of transport for the male gametes among the lower plant groups such as algae, bryophytes and pteridophytes. It is believed, particularly for some bryophytes and pteridophytes, that their distribution is limited because of the need for water for the transport of male gametes and fertilisation. Some examples of water pollinated plants are *Vallisneria* and *Hydrilla* which grow in fresh water and several marine sea-grasses such as *Zostera*. Not all aquatic plants use water for pollination. In a majority of aquatic plants such as water hyacinth and water lily, the flowers emerge above the level of water and are pollinated by insects or wind as in most of the land plants. In *Vallisneria,* the female flower reach the surface of water by the long stalk and the male flowers or pollen grains are released on to the surface of water. They are carried passively by water currents (Figure 1.11a); some of them eventually reach the female flowers and the stigma. In another group of water pollinated plants such as seagrasses, female flowers remain submerged in water and the pollen grains are released inside the water. Pollen grains in many such species are long, ribbon like and they are carried passively inside the water; some of them reach the stigma and achieve pollination. In most of the water-pollinated species, pollen grains are protected from wetting by a mucilaginous covering.

Both wind and water pollinated flowers are not very colourful and do not produce nectar. *What would be the reason for this?*

Majority of flowering plants use a range of animals as pollinating agents. Bees, butterflies, flies, beetles, wasps, ants, moths, birds (sunbirds and humming birds) and bats are the common pollinating agents. (Figure 1.11b). Among the animals, insects, particularly bees are the dominant biotic pollinating agents. Even larger animals such as some primates (lemurs), arboreal (tree-dwelling) rodents, or even reptiles (gecko lizard and garden lizard) have also been reported as pollinators in some species.

Often flowers of animal-pollinated plants are specifically adapted for a particular species of animal.

Majority of insect-pollinated flowers are large, colourful, fragrant and rich in nectar. When the flowers are small, a number of flowers are clustered into an inflorescence to make them conspicuous. Animals are attracted to flowers by colour and/or fragrance. The flowers pollinated by flies and beetles secrete foul odours to attract these animals. To sustain animal visits, the flowers have to provide rewards to the animals. Nectar and pollen grains are the usual floral rewards. For harvesting the reward(s) from the flower the animal visitor comes in contact with the anthers and the stigma. The body of the animal gets a coating of pollen grains, which are generally sticky in animal pollinated flowers. When the animal carrying pollen on its body comes in contact with the stigma, it brings about pollination.



(a)

(b)

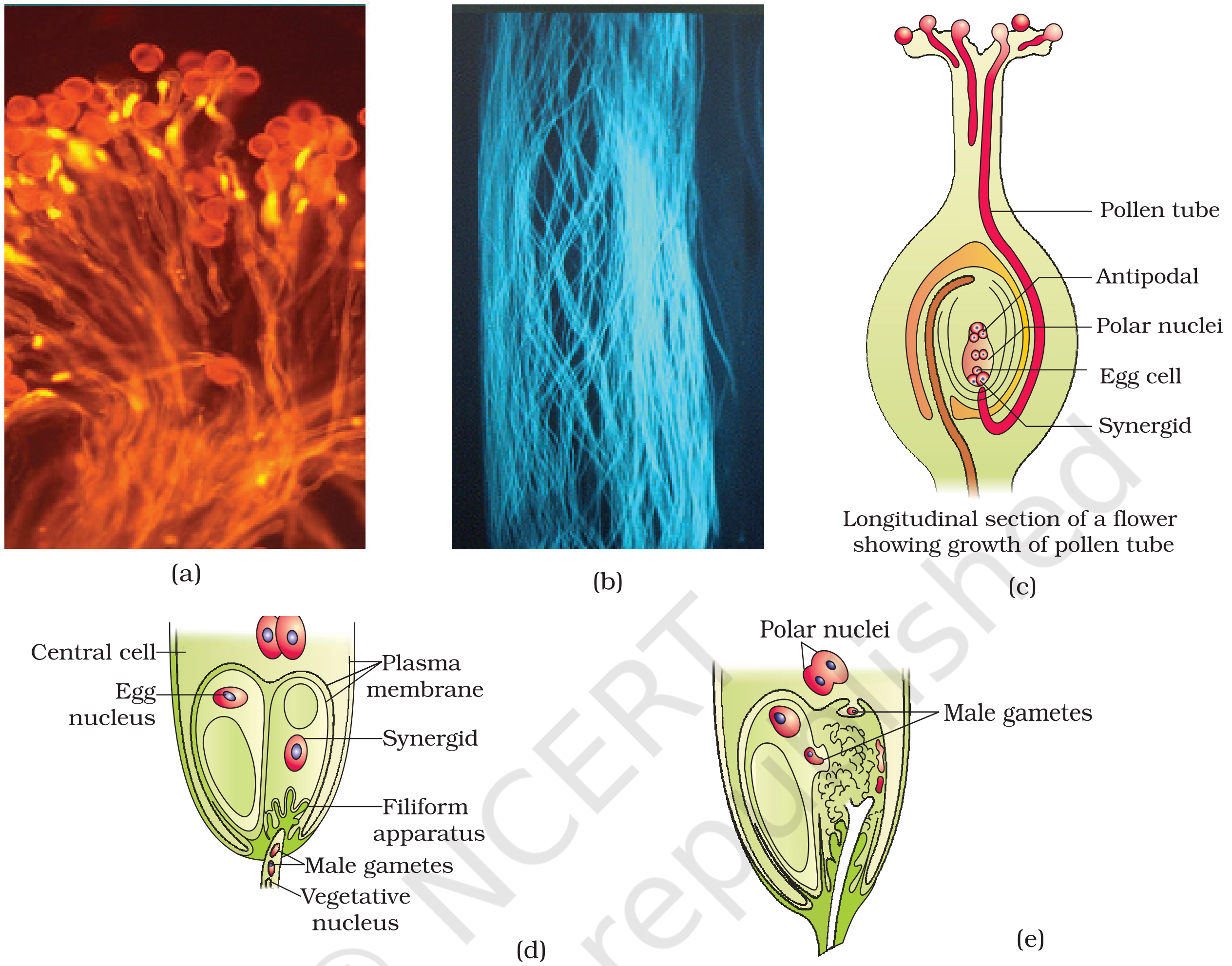
Figure 1.11 (a) Pollination by water in *Vallisneria*; (b) Insect pollination

In some species floral rewards are in providing safe places to lay eggs; an example is that of the tallest flower of *Amorphophallus* (the flower itself is about 6 feet in height). A similar relationship exists between a species of moth and the plant *Yucca* where both species – moth and the plant – cannot complete their life cycles without each other. The moth deposits its eggs in the locule of the ovary and the flower, in turn, gets pollinated by the moth. The larvae of the moth come out of the eggs as the seeds start developing.

Why don't you observe some flowers of the following plants (or any others available to you): Cucumber, Mango, Peepal, Coriander, Papaya, Onion, Lobia, Cotton, Tobacco, Rose, Lemon, Eucalyptus, Banana? Try to find out which animals visit them and whether they could be pollinators. You'll have to patiently observe the flowers over a few days and at different times of the day. You could also try to see whether there is any correlation in the characteristics of a flower to the animal that visits it. Carefully observe if any of the visitors come in contact with the anthers and the stigma as only such visitors can bring about pollination. Many insects may consume pollen or the nectar without bringing about pollination. Such floral visitors are referred to as pollen/nectar robbers. You may or may not be able to identify the pollinators, but you will surely enjoy your efforts!

Outbreeding Devices : Majority of flowering plants produce hermaphrodite flowers and pollen grains are likely to come in contact with the stigma of the same flower. Continued self-pollination result in inbreeding depression. Flowering plants have developed many devices to discourage self-pollination and to encourage cross-pollination. In some species, pollen release and stigma receptivity are not synchronised. Either the pollen is released before the stigma becomes receptive or stigma becomes receptive much before the release of pollen. In some other species, the anther and stigma are placed at different positions so that the pollen cannot come in contact with the stigma of the same flower. Both these devices prevent autogamy. The third device to prevent inbreeding is self-incompatibility. This is a genetic mechanism and prevents self-pollen (from the same flower or other flowers of the same plant) from fertilising the ovules by inhibiting pollen germination or pollen tube growth in the pistil. Another device to prevent self-pollination is the production of unisexual flowers. If both male and female flowers are present on the same plant such as castor and maize (monoecious), it prevents autogamy but not geitonogamy. In several species such as papaya, male and female flowers are present on different plants, that is each plant is either male or female (dioecy). This condition prevents both autogamy and geitonogamy.

Pollen-pistil Interaction : Pollination does not guarantee the transfer of the right type of pollen (compatible pollen of the same species as the stigma). Often, pollen of the wrong type, either from other species or from the same plant (if it is self-incompatible), also land on the stigma. The pistil has the ability to recognise the pollen, whether it is of the right type (compatible) or of the wrong type (incompatible). If it is of the right type, the pistil accepts the pollen and promotes post-pollination events that


Pollen tube
Antipodal
Polar nuclei
Egg cell
Synergid
Longitudinal section of a flower showing growth of pollen tube
Central cell
Egg nucleus
Plasma membrane
Synergid
Filiform apparatus
Male gametes
Vegetative nucleus
Polar nuclei
Male gametes

(a) (b) (c) (d) (e)

Figure 1.12 (a) Pollen grains germinating on the stigma; (b) Pollen tubes growing through the style; (c) L.S. of pistil showing path of pollen tube growth; (d) enlarged view of an egg apparatus showing entry of pollen tube into a synergid; (e) Discharge of male gametes into a synergid and the movements of the sperms, one into the egg and the other into the central cell

leads to fertilisation. If the pollen is of the wrong type, the pistil rejects the pollen by preventing pollen germination on the stigma or the pollen tube growth in the style. The ability of the pistil to recognise the pollen followed by its acceptance or rejection is the result of a continuous dialogue between pollen grain and the pistil. This dialogue is mediated by chemical components of the pollen interacting with those of the pistil. It is only in recent years that botanists have been able to identify some of the pollen and pistil components and the interactions leading to the recognition, followed by acceptance or rejection.

As mentioned earlier, following compatible pollination, the pollen grain germinates on the stigma to produce a pollen tube through one of the germ pores (Figure 1.12a). The contents of the pollen grain move into the pollen tube. Pollen tube grows through the tissues of the stigma and style and reaches the ovary (Figure 1.12b, c). You would recall that in some plants, pollen grains are shed at two-celled condition (a vegetative cell and a generative cell). In such plants, the generative cell divides and forms the two male gametes during the growth of pollen tube in the stigma. In plants which shed pollen in the three-celled condition, pollen tubes carry the two male gametes from the beginning. Pollen tube, after reaching the ovary, enters the ovule through the micropyle and then enters one of the synergids through the filiform apparatus (Figure 1.12d, e). Many recent studies have shown that filiform apparatus present at the micropylar part of the synergids guides the entry of pollen tube. All these events–from pollen deposition on the stigma until pollen tubes enter the ovule–are together referred to as pollen-pistil interaction. As pointed out earlier, pollen-pistil interaction is a dynamic process involving pollen recognition followed by promotion or inhibition of the pollen. The knowledge gained in this area would help the plant breeder in manipulating pollen-pistil interaction, even in incompatible pollinations, to get desired hybrids.

You can easily study pollen germination by dusting some pollen from flowers such as pea, chickpea, *Crotalaria*, balsam and *Vinca* on a glass slide containing a drop of sugar solution (about 10 per cent). After about 15–30 minutes, observe the slide under the low power lens of the microscope. You are likely to see pollen tubes coming out of the pollen grains.

A breeder is interested in crossing different species and often genera to combine desirable characters to produce commercially 'superior' varieties. **Artificial hybridisation** is one of the major approaches of crop improvement programme. In such crossing experiments it is important to make sure that only the desired pollen grains are used for pollination and the stigma is protected from contamination (from unwanted pollen). This is achieved by emasculation and bagging techniques.

If the female parent bears bisexual flowers, removal of anthers from the flower bud before the anther dehisces using a pair of forceps is necessary. This step is referred to as **emasculation**. Emasculated flowers have to be covered with a bag of suitable size, generally made up of butter paper, to prevent contamination of its stigma with unwanted pollen. This process is called **bagging**. When the stigma of bagged flower attains receptivity, mature pollen grains collected from anthers of the male parent are dusted on the stigma, and the flowers are rebagged, and the fruits allowed to develop.

If the female parent produces unisexual flowers, there is no need for emasculation. The female flower buds are bagged before the flowers open. When the stigma becomes receptive, pollination is carried out using the desired pollen and the flower rebagged.

1.3 DOUBLE FERTILISATION

After entering one of the synergids, the pollen tube releases the two male gametes into the cytoplasm of the synergid. One of the male gametes moves towards the egg cell and fuses with its nucleus thus completing the **syngamy**. This results in the formation of a diploid cell, the **zygote.** The other male gamete moves towards the two polar nuclei located in the central cell and fuses with them to produce a triploid **primary endosperm nucleus** (PEN) (Figure 1.13a). As this involves the fusion of three haploid nuclei it is termed **triple fusion.** Since two types of fusions, syngamy and triple fusion take place in an embryo sac the phenomenon is termed **double fertilisation**, an event unique to flowering plants. The central cell after triple fusion becomes the **primary endosperm cell** (PEC) and develops into the **endosperm** while the zygote develops into an **embryo.**

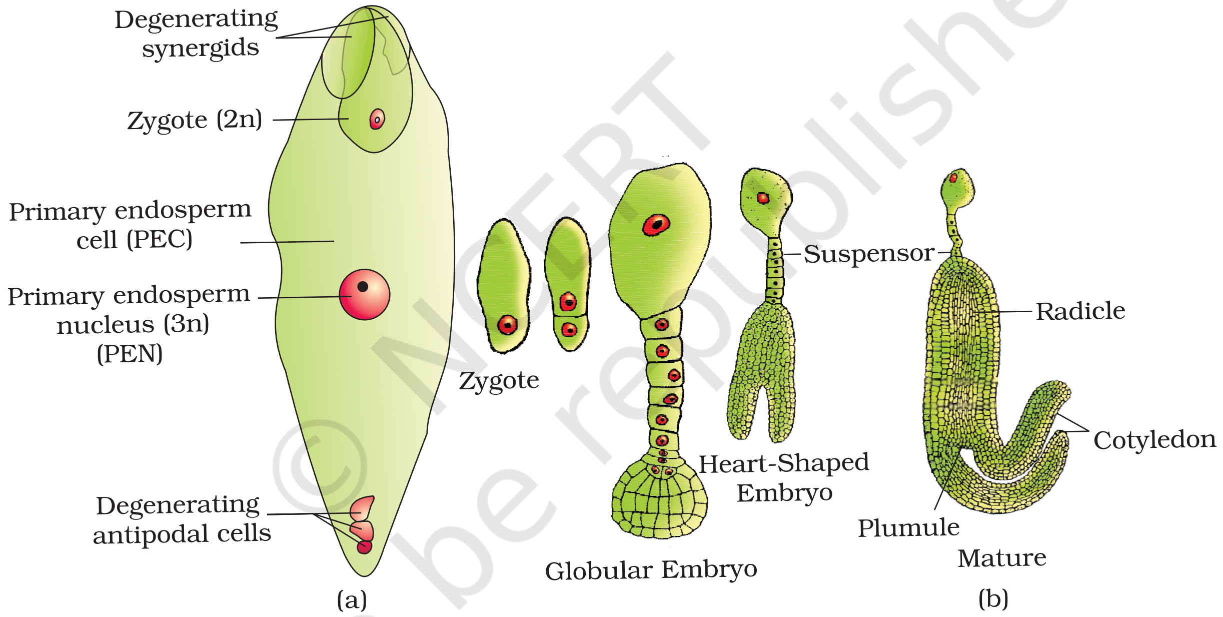

Degenerating synergids
Zygote (2n)
Primary endosperm cell (PEC)
Primary endosperm nucleus (3n) (PEN)
Degenerating antipodal cells
(a)
Zygote
Globular Embryo
Suspensor
Heart-Shaped Embryo
Radicle
Cotyledon
Plumule
Mature
(b)

Figure 1.13 (a) Fertilised embryo sac showing zygote and Primary Endosperm Nucleus (PEN); (b) Stages in embryo development in a dicot [shown in reduced size as compared to (a)]

1.4 POST-FERTILISATION : STRUCTURES AND EVENTS

Following double fertilisation, events of endosperm and embryo development, maturation of ovule(s) into seed(s) and ovary into fruit, are collectively termed **post-fertilisation events.**

1.4.1 Endosperm

Endosperm development precedes embryo development. *Why?* The primary endosperm cell divides repeatedly and forms a triploid endosperm tissue. The cells of this tissue are filled with reserve food materials and are used for the nutrition of the developing embryo. In the most common type of endosperm development, the PEN undergoes successive nuclear divisions to give rise to free nuclei. This stage of endosperm development is called free-nuclear endosperm. Subsequently cell wall formation occurs and the endosperm becomes cellular. The number of free nuclei formed before cellularisation varies greatly. The coconut water from tender coconut that you are familiar with, is nothing but free-nuclear endosperm (made up of thousands of nuclei) and the surrounding white kernel is the cellular endosperm.

Endosperm may either be completely consumed by the developing embryo (e.g., pea, groundnut, beans) before seed maturation or it may persist in the mature seed (e.g. castor and coconut) and be used up during seed germination. *Split open some seeds of castor, peas, beans, groundnut, fruit of coconut and look for the endosperm in each case. Find out whether the endosperm is persistent in cereals – wheat, rice and maize.*

1.4.2 Embryo

Embryo develops at the micropylar end of the embryo sac where the zygote is situated. Most zygotes divide only after certain amount of endosperm is formed. This is an adaptation to provide assured nutrition to the developing embryo. Though the seeds differ greatly, the early stages of embryo development **(embryogeny)** are similar in both monocotyledons and dicotyledons. Figure 1.13 depicts the stages of embryogeny in a dicotyledonous embryo. The zygote gives rise to the **proembryo** and subsequently to the **globular, heart-shaped** and **mature embryo**.

A typical dicotyledonous embryo (Figure 1.14a), consists of an **embryonal axis** and two **cotyledons.** The portion of embryonal axis above the level of cotyledons is the **epicotyl,** which terminates with the **plumule** or stem tip. The cylindrical portion below the level of cotyledons is **hypocotyl** that terminates at its lower end in the **radicle** or **root tip.** The root tip is covered with a **root cap.**

Embryos of monocotyledons (Figure 1.14 b) possess only one cotyledon. In the grass family the cotyledon is called **scutellum** that is situated towards one side (lateral) of the embryonal axis. At its lower end, the embryonal axis has the

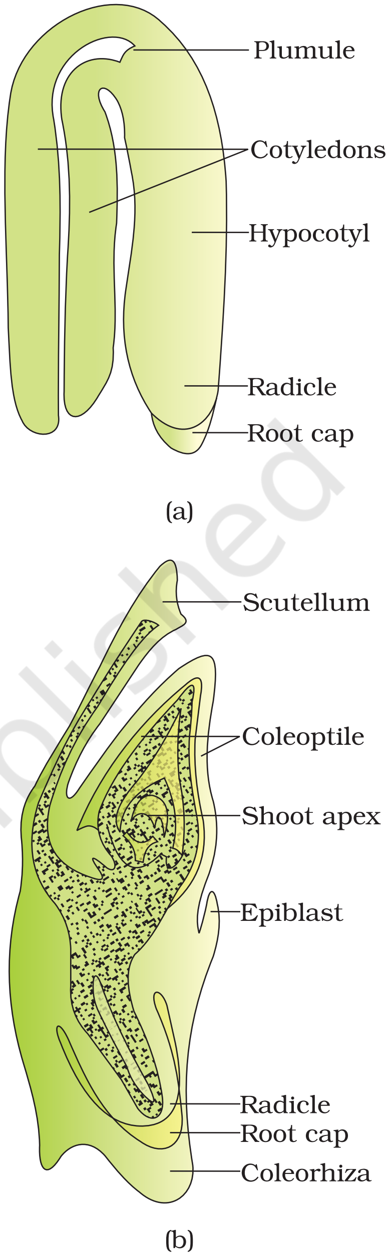


Figure 1.14 (a) A typical dicot embryo; (b) L.S. of an embryo of grass

radical and root cap enclosed in an undifferentiated sheath called **coleorrhiza.** The portion of the embryonal axis above the level of attachment of scutellum is the epicotyl. Epicotyl has a shoot apex and a few leaf primordia enclosed in a hollow foliar structure, the **coleoptile.**

Soak a few seeds in water (say of wheat, maize, peas, chickpeas, ground nut) overnight. Then split the seeds and observe the various parts of the embryo and the seed.

1.4.3 Seed

In angiosperms, the seed is the final product of sexual reproduction. It is often described as a fertilised ovule. Seeds are formed inside fruits. A seed typically consists of seed coat(s), cotyledon(s) and an embryo axis. The cotyledons (Figure 1.15a) of the embryo are simple structures, generally thick and swollen due to storage of food reserves (as in legumes). Mature seeds may be **non-albuminous** or **ex-albuminous**. Non-albuminous seeds have no residual endosperm as it is completely consumed during embryo development (e.g., pea, groundnut). Albuminous seeds retain a part of endosperm as it is not completely used up during embryo development (e.g., wheat, maize, barley, castor). Occasionally, in some seeds such as black pepper and beet, remnants of nucellus are also persistent. This residual, persistent nucellus is the **perisperm.**

Integuments of ovules harden as tough protective seed coats (Figure 1.15a). The micropyle remains as a small pore in the seed coat. This facilitates entry of oxygen and water into the seed during germination. As the seed matures, its water content is reduced and seeds become relatively dry (10-15 per cent moisture by mass). The general metabolic activity of the embryo slows down. The embryo may enter a state of inactivity called **dormancy,** or if favourable conditions are available (adequate moisture, oxygen and suitable temperature), they germinate.

As ovules mature into seeds, the ovary develops into a fruit, i.e., the transformation of ovules into seeds and ovary into fruit proceeds simultaneously. The wall of the ovary develops into the wall of fruit called **pericarp**. The fruits may be fleshy as in guava, orange, mango, etc., or may be dry, as in groundnut, and mustard, etc. Many fruits have evolved mechanisms for dispersal of seeds. Recall the classification of fruits and their dispersal mechanisms that you have studied in an earlier class. *Is there any relationship between number of ovules in an ovary and the number of seeds present in a fruit?*

In most plants, by the time the fruit develops from the ovary, other floral parts degenerate and fall off. However, in a few species such as apple, strawberry, cashew, etc., the thalamus also contributes to fruit formation. Such fruits are called **false fruits** (Figure 1.15b). Most fruits however develop only from the ovary and are called **true fruits**. Although in most of the species, fruits are the results of fertilisation, there are a few species

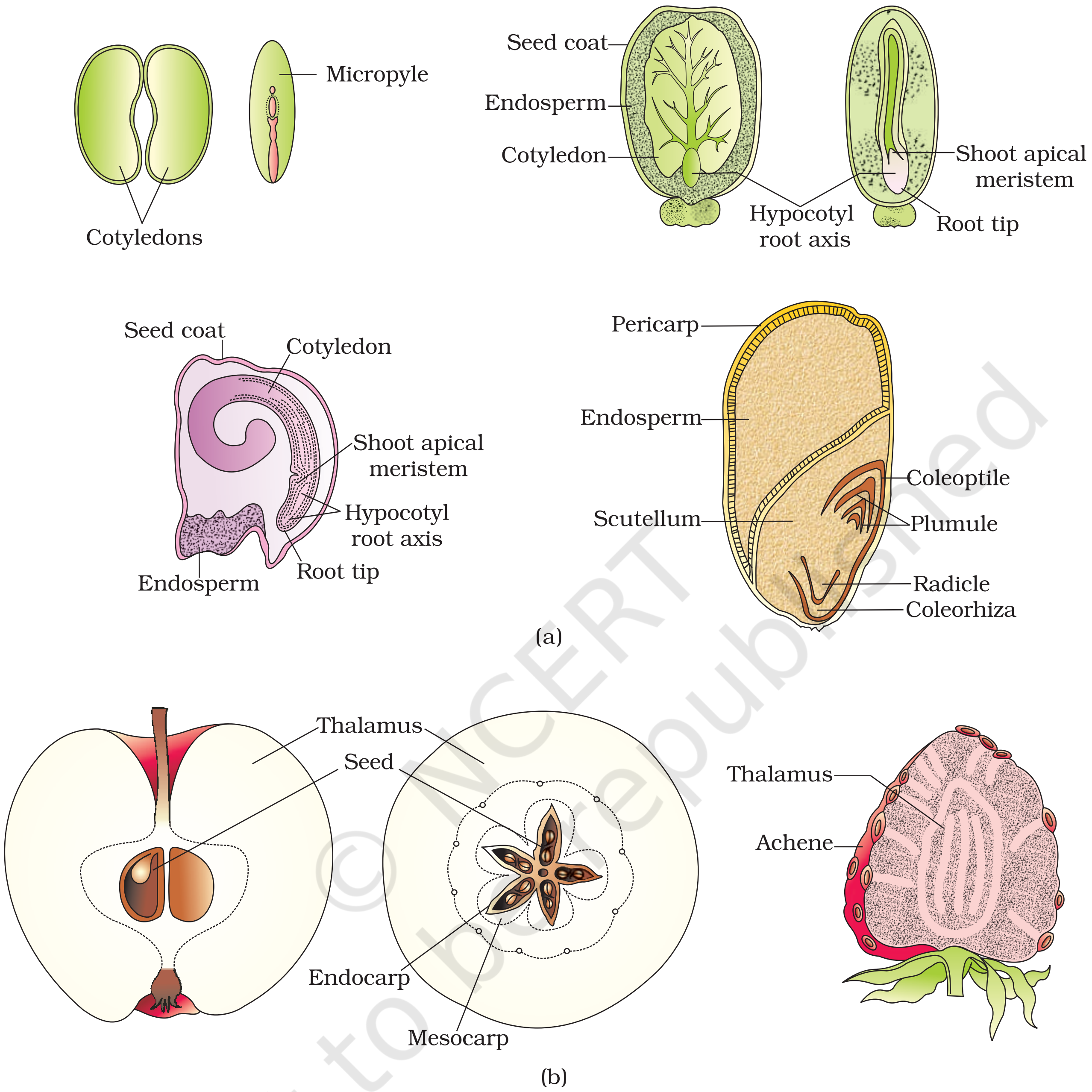

Micropyle
Cotyledons
Seed coat
Endosperm
Cotyledon
Hypocotyl root axis
Shoot apical meristem
Root tip
Seed coat
Cotyledon
Shoot apical meristem
Hypocotyl root axis
Root tip
Endosperm
Pericarp
Endosperm
Coleoptile
Scutellum
Plumule
Radicle
Coleorhiza
(a)
Thalamus
Seed
Endocarp
Mesocarp
Thalamus
Achene
(b)

Figure 1.15 (a) Structure of some seeds. (b) False fruits of apple and strawberry

in which fruits develop without fertilisation. Such fruits are called **parthenocarpic fruits.** Banana is one such example. Parthenocarpy can be induced through the application of growth hormones and such fruits are seedless.

Seeds offer several advantages to angiosperms. Firstly, since reproductive processes such as pollination and fertilisation are independent of water, seed formation is more dependable. Also seeds have better adaptive strategies for dispersal to new habitats and help the species to colonise in other areas. As they have sufficient food reserves, young seedlings are nourished until they are capable of photosynthesis on their own. The hard seed coat provides protection to the young embryo. Being products of sexual reproduction, they generate new genetic combinations leading to variations.

Seed is the basis of our agriculture. Dehydration and dormancy of mature seeds are crucial for storage of seeds which can be used as food throughout the year and also to raise crop in the next season. Can you imagine agriculture in the absence of seeds, or in the presence of seeds which germinate straight away soon after formation and cannot be stored?

How long do the seeds remain alive after they are dispersed? This period again varies greatly. In a few species the seeds lose viability within a few months. Seeds of a large number of species live for several years. Some seeds can remain alive for hundreds of years. There are several records of very old yet viable seeds. The oldest is that of a lupine, *Lupinus arcticus* excavated from Arctic Tundra. The seed germinated and flowered after an estimated record of 10,000 years of dormancy. A recent record of 2000 years old viable seed is of the date palm, *Phoenix dactylifera* discovered during the archeological excavation at King Herod's palace near the Dead Sea.

After completing a brief account of sexual reproduction of flowering plants it would be worth attempting to comprehend the enormous reproductive capacity of some flowering plants by asking the following questions: How many eggs are present in an embryo sac? How many embryo sacs are present in an ovule? How many ovules are present in an ovary? How many ovaries are present in a typical flower? How many flowers are present on a tree? And so on...

Can you think of some plants in which fruits contain very large number of seeds. Orchid fruits are one such category and each fruit contain thousands of tiny seeds. Similar is the case in fruits of some parasitic species such as Orobanche and Striga. Have you seen a tiny seed of Ficus? How large is the tree of Ficus developed from that tiny seed. How many billions of seeds does each Ficus tree produce? Can you imagine any other example in which such a tiny structure can produce such a large biomass over the years?

1.5 APOMIXIS AND POLYEMBRYONY

Although seeds, in general are the products of fertilisation, a few flowering plants such as some species of *Asteraceae* and grasses, have evolved a special mechanism, to produce seeds without fertilisation, called **apomixis.** *What is fruit production without fertilisation called?* Thus, apomixis is a form of asexual reproduction that mimics sexual reproduction. There are several ways of development of apomictic seeds. In some species, the diploid egg cell is formed without reduction division and develops into the embryo without fertilisation. More often, as in many *Citrus* and *Mango* varieties some of the nucellar cells surrounding the embryo sac start dividing, protrude into the embryo sac and develop into the embryos. In such species each ovule contains many embryos. Occurrence of more than one embryo in a seed is referred to as **polyembryony**. *Take out some seeds of orange and squeeze them. Observe the many embryos of different sizes and shapes from each seed. Count the number of embryos in each seed. What would be the genetic nature of apomictic embryos? Can they be called clones?*

Hybrid varieties of several of our food and vegetable crops are being extensively cultivated. Cultivation of hybrids has tremendously increased productivity. One of the problems of hybrids is that hybrid seeds have to be produced every year. If the seeds collected from hybrids are sown, the plants in the progeny will segregate and do not maintain hybrid characters. Production of hybrid seeds is costly and hence the cost of hybrid seeds become too expensive for the farmers. If these hybrids are made into apomicts, there is no segregation of characters in the hybrid progeny. Then the farmers can keep on using the hybrid seeds to raise new crop year after year and he does not have to buy hybrid seeds every year. Because of the importance of apomixis in hybrid seed industry, active research is going on in many laboratories around the world to understand the genetics of apomixis and to transfer apomictic genes into hybrid varieties.

SUMMARY

Flowers are the seat of sexual reproduction in angiosperms. In the flower, androecium consisting of stamens represents the male reproductive organs and gynoecium consisting of pistils represents the female reproductive organs.

A typical anther is bilobed, dithecous and tetrasporangiate. Pollen grains develop inside the microsporangia. Four wall layers, the epidermis, endothecium, middle layers and the tapetum surround the microsporangium. Cells of the sporogenous tissue lying in the centre of the microsporangium, undergo meiosis (microsporogenesis) to form tetrads of microspores. Individual microspores mature into pollen grains.

Pollen grains represents the male gametophytic generation. The pollen grains have a two-layered wall, the outer exine and inner intine. The exine is made up of sporopollenin and has germ pores. Pollen grains may have two cells (a vegetative cell and generative cell) or three cells (a vegetative cell and two male gametes) at the time of shedding.

The pistil has three parts – the stigma, style and the ovary. Ovules are present in the ovary. The ovules have a stalk called funicle, protective integument(s), and an opening called micropyle. The central tissue is the nucellus in which the archesporium differentiates. A cell of the archesporium, the megaspore mother cell divides meiotically and one of the megaspores forms the embryo sac (the female gametophyte). The mature embryo sac is 7-celled and 8-nucleate. At the micropylar end is

the egg apparatus consisting of two synergids and an egg cell. At the chalazal end are three antipodals. At the centre is a large central cell with two polar nuclei.

Pollination is the mechanism to transfer pollen grains from the anther to the stigma. Pollinating agents are either abiotic (wind and water) or biotic (animals).

Pollen-pistil interaction involves all events from the landing of pollen grains on the stigma until the pollen tube enters the embryo sac (when the pollen is compatible) or pollen inhibition (when the pollen is incompatible). Following compatible pollination, pollen grain germinates on the stigma and the resulting pollen tube grow through the style, enter the ovules and finally discharges two male gametes in one of the synergids. Angiosperms exhibit double fertilisation because two fusion events occur in each embryo sac, namely syngamy and triple fusion. The products of these fusions are the diploid zygote and the triploid primary endosperm nucleus (in the primary endosperm cell). Zygote develops into the embryo and the primary endosperm cell forms the endosperm tissue. Formation of endosperm always precedes development of the embryo.

The developing embryo passes through different stages such as the proembryo, globular and heart-shaped stages before maturation. Mature dicotyledonous embryo has two cotyledons and an embryonal axis with epicotyl and hypocotyl. Embryos of monocotyledons have a single cotyledon. After fertilisation, ovary develops into fruit and ovules develop into seeds.

A phenomenon called apomixis is found in some angiosperms, particularly in grasses. It results in the formation of seeds without fertilisation. Apomicts have several advantages in horticulture and agriculture.

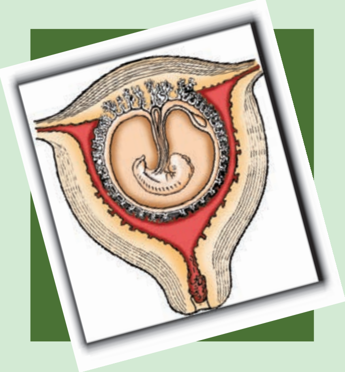
Some angiosperms produce more than one embryo in their seed. This phenomenon is called polyembryony.

EXERCISES

1. Name the parts of an angiosperm flower in which development of male and female gametophyte take place.
2. Differentiate between microsporogenesis and megasporogenesis. Which type of cell division occurs during these events? Name the structures formed at the end of these two events.
3. Arrange the following terms in the correct developmental sequence:

   Pollen grain, sporogenous tissue, microspore tetrad, pollen mother cell, male gametes.
4. With a neat, labelled diagram, describe the parts of a typical angiosperm ovule.
5. What is meant by monosporic development of female gametophyte?
6. With a neat diagram explain the 7-celled, 8-nucleate nature of the female gametophyte.

7. What are chasmogamous flowers? Can cross-pollination occur in cleistogamous flowers? Give reasons for your answer.
8. Mention two strategies evolved to prevent self-pollination in flowers.
9. What is self-incompatibility? Why does self-pollination not lead to seed formation in self-incompatible species?
10. What is bagging technique? How is it useful in a plant breeding programme?
11. What is triple fusion? Where and how does it take place? Name the nuclei involved in triple fusion.
12. Why do you think the zygote is dormant for sometime in a fertilised ovule?
13. Differentiate between:
    (a) hypocotyl and epicotyl;
    (b) coleoptile and coleorrhiza;
    (c) integument and testa;
    (d) perisperm and pericarp.
14. Why is apple called a false fruit? Which part(s) of the flower forms the fruit?
15. What is meant by emasculation? When and why does a plant breeder employ this technique?
16. If one can induce parthenocarpy through the application of growth substances, which fruits would you select to induce parthenocarpy and why?
17. Explain the role of tapetum in the formation of pollen-grain wall.
18. What is apomixis and what is its importance?



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CHAPTER 2

HUMAN REPRODUCTION

2.1 *The Male Reproductive System*

2.2 *The Female Reproductive System*

2.3 *Gametogenesis*

2.4 *Menstrual Cycle*

2.5 *Fertilisation and Implantation*

2.6 *Pregnancy and Embryonic Development*

2.7 *Parturition and Lactation*

As you are aware, humans are sexually reproducing and viviparous. The reproductive events in humans include formation of gametes (gametogenesis), i.e., sperms in males and ovum in females, transfer of sperms into the female genital tract (insemination) and fusion of male and female gametes (fertilisation) leading to formation of zygote. This is followed by formation and development of blastocyst and its attachment to the uterine wall (implantation), embryonic development (gestation) and delivery of the baby (parturition). You have learnt that these reproductive events occur after puberty. There are remarkable differences between the reproductive events in the male and in the female, for example, sperm formation continues even in old men, but formation of ovum ceases in women around the age of fifty years. Let us examine the male and female reproductive systems in human.

2.1 THE MALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

The male reproductive system is located in the pelvis region (Figure 2.1a). It includes a pair of **testes** alongwith **accessory ducts, glands** and the **external genitalia**.

The testes are situated outside the abdominal cavity within a pouch called **scrotum**. The scrotum helps in maintaining the low temperature of the testes (2–2.5° C lower than the normal internal body temperature) necessary for spermatogenesis. In adults, each testis is oval in shape, with a length of about 4 to 5 cm and a width of about 2 to 3 cm. The testis is covered by a dense covering. Each testis has about 250 compartments called **testicular lobules** (Figure 2.1b).

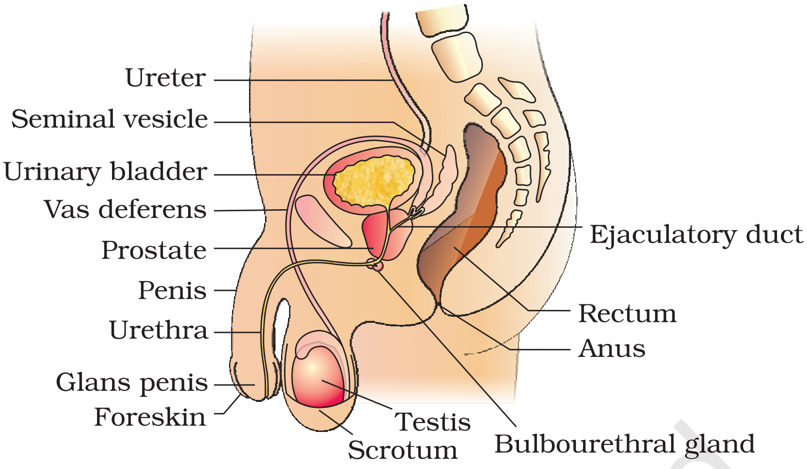

Ureter
Seminal vesicle
Urinary bladder
Vas deferens
Prostate
Penis
Urethra
Glans penis
Foreskin
Testis
Scrotum
Bulbourethral gland
Ejaculatory duct
Rectum
Anus

Figure 2.1(a) Diagrammatic sectional view of male pelvis showing reproductive system

Each lobule contains one to three highly coiled **seminiferous tubules** in which sperms are produced. Each seminiferous tubule is lined on its inside by two types of cells called **male germ cells** (*spermatogonia*) and **Sertoli cells** (Figure 2.2). The male germ cells undergo meiotic divisions finally leading to sperm formation, while Sertoli cells provide nutrition to the germ cells. The regions outside the seminiferous tubules called interstitial spaces, contain small blood vessels and **interstitial cells** or **Leydig cells** (Figure 2.2). Leydig cells synthesise and secrete testicular hormones called androgens. Other immunologically competent cells are also present.

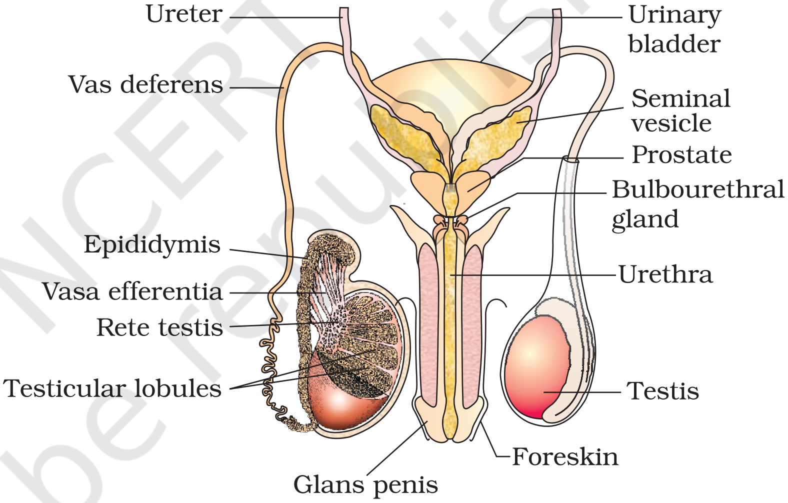

Ureter
Vas deferens
Epididymis
Vasa efferentia
Rete testis
Testicular lobules
Glans penis
Urinary bladder
Seminal vesicle
Prostate
Bulbourethral gland
Urethra
Testis
Foreskin

Figure 2.1(b) Diagrammatic view of male reproductive system (part of testis is open to show inner details)

The male sex accessory ducts include **rete testis, vasa efferentia**, **epididymis** and **vas deferens** (Figure 2.1b). The seminiferous tubules of the testis open into the vasa efferentia through rete testis. The vasa efferentia leave the testis and open into epididymis located along the posterior surface of each testis. The epididymis leads to vas deferens that ascends to the abdomen and loops over the urinary bladder. It receives a duct from seminal vesicle and opens into urethra as the ejaculatory duct (Figure 2.1a). These ducts store and transport the sperms from the testis to the outside through urethra. The urethra originates from the urinary bladder and extends through the penis to its external opening called **urethral meatus**.

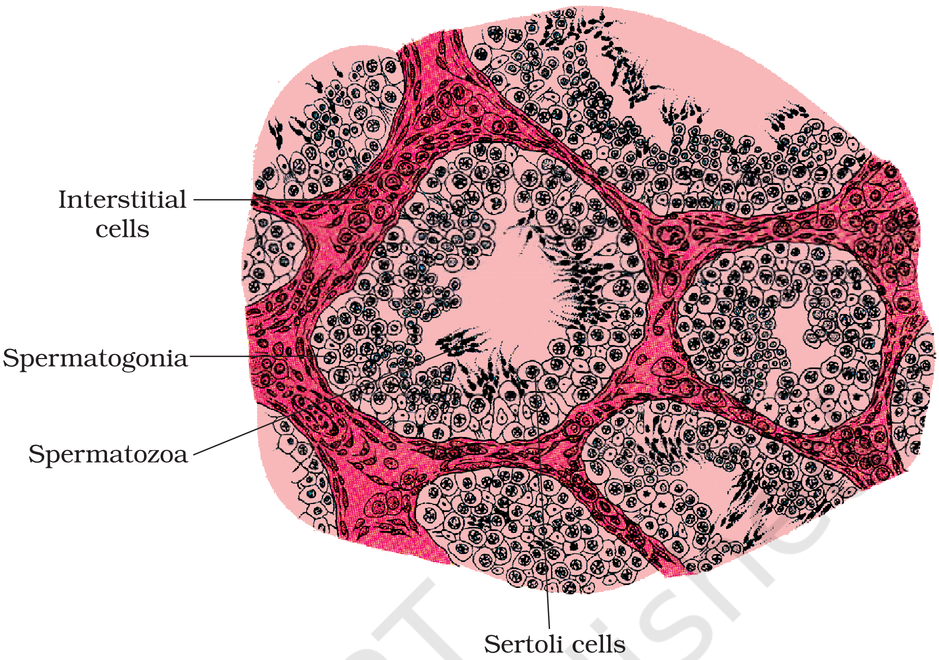


Figure 2.2 Diagrammatic sectional view of seminiferous tubule

The penis is the male external genitalia (Figure 2.1a, b). It is made up of special tissue that helps in erection of the penis to facilitate insemination. The enlarged end of penis called the glans penis is covered by a loose fold of skin called **foreskin**.

The male accessory glands (Figure 2.1a, b) include paired **seminal vesicles**, a **prostate** and paired **bulbourethral** glands. Secretions of these glands constitute the seminal plasma which is rich in fructose, calcium and certain enzymes. The secretions of bulbourethral glands also helps in the lubrication of the penis.

2.2 The Female Reproductive System

The female reproductive system consists of a pair of **ovaries** alongwith a pair of **oviducts, uterus, cervix, vagina** and the **external genitalia** located in pelvic region (Figure 2.3a). These parts of the system alongwith a pair of the **mammary glands** are integrated structurally and functionally to support the processes of ovulation, fertilisation, pregnancy, birth and child care.

Ovaries are the primary female sex organs that produce the female gamete (ovum) and several steroid hormones (ovarian hormones). The ovaries are located one on each side of the lower abdomen (Figure 2.3b). Each ovary is about 2 to 4 cm in length and is connected to the pelvic wall and uterus by ligaments. Each ovary is covered by a thin epithelium which encloses the ovarian stroma. The stroma is divided into two zones – a peripheral cortex and an inner medulla.

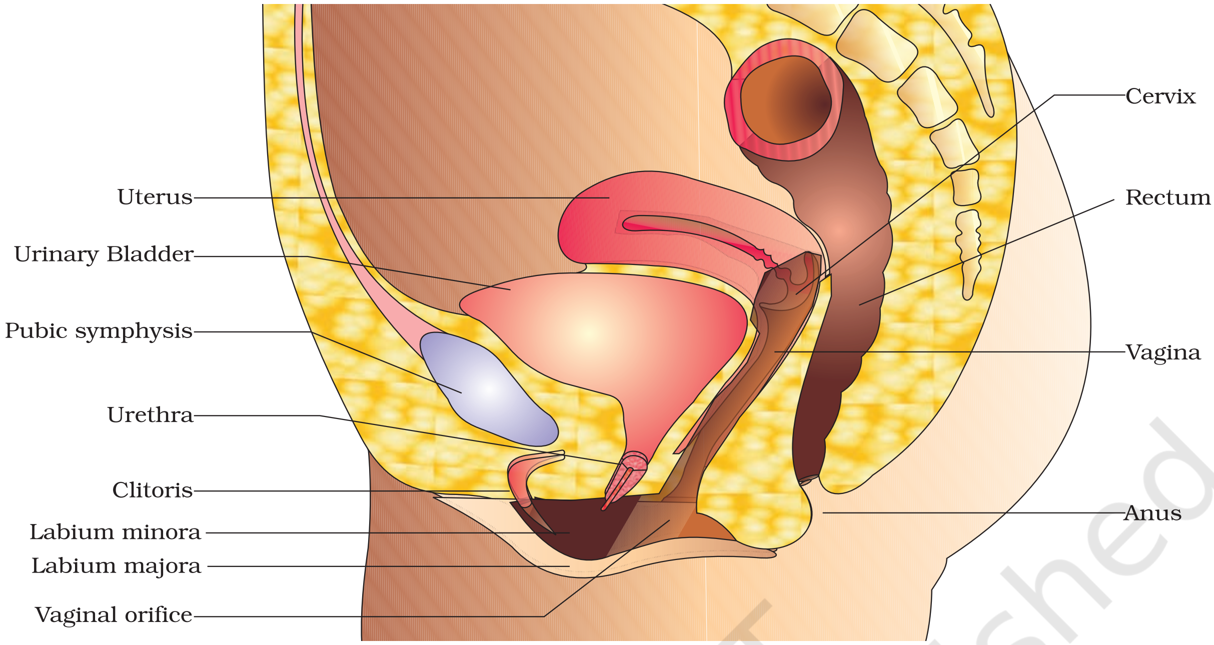

Uterus
Urinary Bladder
Pubic symphysis
Urethra
Clitoris
Labium minora
Labium majora
Vaginal orifice
Cervix
Rectum
Vagina
Anus

Figure 2.3 (a) Diagrammatic sectional view of female pelvis showing reproductive system

The oviducts (fallopian tubes), uterus and vagina constitute the female accessory ducts. Each fallopian tube is about 10-12 cm long and extends from the periphery of each ovary to the uterus (Figure 2.3b), the part closer to the ovary is the funnel-shaped **infundibulum**. The edges of the infundibulum possess finger-like projections called **fimbriae**, which help in collection of the ovum after ovulation. The infundibulum leads to a wider

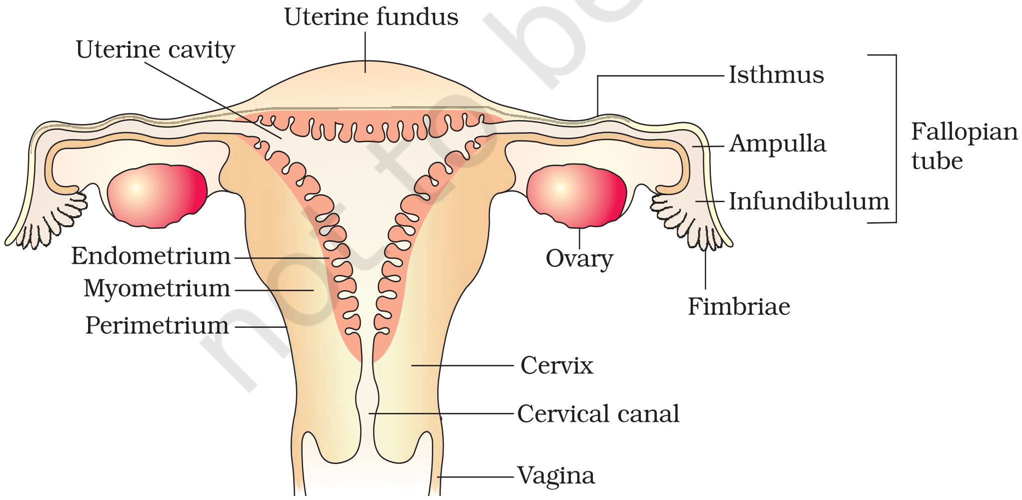

Uterine fundus
Uterine cavity
Isthmus
Ampulla
Infundibulum
Fallopian tube
Endometrium
Myometrium
Perimetrium
Ovary
Fimbriae
Cervix
Cervical canal
Vagina

Figure 2.3 (b) Diagrammatic sectional view of the female reproductive system part of the oviduct called **ampulla**. The last part of the oviduct, **isthmus** has a narrow lumen and it joins the uterus.

The uterus is single and it is also called **womb**. The shape of the uterus is like an inverted pear. It is supported by ligaments attached to the pelvic wall. The uterus opens into vagina through a narrow cervix. The cavity of the cervix is called **cervical canal** (Figure 2.3b) which alongwith vagina forms the birth canal. The wall of the uterus has three layers of tissue. The external thin membranous **perimetrium,** middle thick layer of smooth muscle, **myometrium** and inner glandular layer called **endometrium** that lines the uterine cavity. The endometrium undergoes cyclical changes during menstrual cycle while the myometrium exhibits strong contraction during delivery of the baby.

The female external genitalia include mons pubis, labia majora, labia minora, hymen and clitoris (Figure 2.3a). **Mons pubis** is a cushion of fatty tissue covered by skin and pubic hair. The **labia majora** are fleshy folds of tissue, which extend down from the mons pubis and surround the vaginal opening. The **labia minora** are paired folds of tissue under the labia majora. The opening of the vagina is often covered partially by a membrane called **hymen**. The **clitoris** is a tiny finger-like structure which lies at the upper junction of the two labia minora above the urethral opening. The hymen is often torn during the first coitus (intercourse). *However, it can also be broken by a sudden fall or jolt, insertion of a vaginal tampon, active participation in some sports like horseback riding, cycling, etc. In some women the hymen persists even after coitus. In fact, the presence or absence of hymen is not a reliable indicator of virginity or sexual experience.*

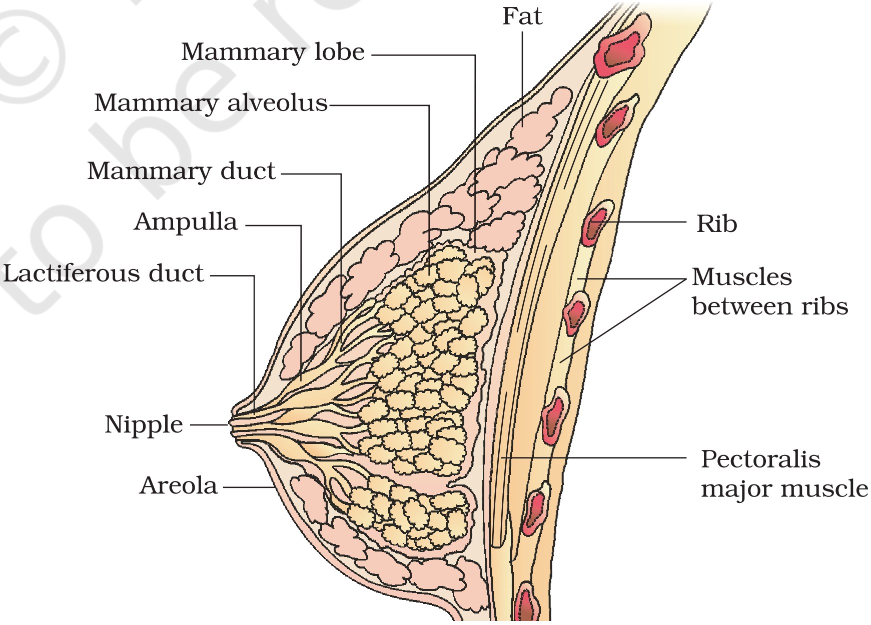


Figure 2.4 A diagrammatic sectional view of Mammary gland

A functional mammary gland is characteristic of all female mammals. The mammary glands are paired structures (breasts) that contain glandular tissue and variable amount of fat. The glandular tissue of each breast is divided into 15-20 **mammary lobes** containing clusters of cells called alveoli (Figure 2.4). The cells of alveoli secrete milk, which is stored in the cavities (lumens) of alveoli. The alveoli open into mammary tubules. The tubules of each lobe join to form a **mammary duct**. Several mammary ducts join to form a wider mammary ampulla which is connected to **lactiferous duct** and opens at the nipple, from where milk is expressed during breastfeeding.

2.3 GAMETOGENESIS

The primary sex organs – the testis in the males and the ovaries in the females – produce gametes, i.e, sperms and ovum, respectively, by the process called gametogenesis. In testis, the immature male germ cells (spermatogonia) produce sperms by **spermatogenesis** that begins at puberty. The **spermatogonia** (sing. spermatogonium) present on the inside wall of seminiferous tubules multiply by mitotic division and increase in numbers. Each spermatogonium is diploid and contains 46 chromosomes. Some of the spermatogonia called **primary spermatocytes** periodically undergo meiosis. A primary spermatocyte completes the first meiotic division (reduction division) leading to formation of two equal, haploid cells called **secondary spermatocytes**, which have only 23 chromosomes each. The secondary spermatocytes undergo the second meiotic division to produce four equal, haploid **spermatids** (Figure 2.5). *What would be the number of chromosome in the spermatids?* The spermatids are transformed into **spermatozoa** (**sperms**) by the process called **spermiogenesis**. After spermiogenesis, sperm heads become embedded in the **Sertoli cells**, and are finally released from the seminiferous tubules by the process called **spermiation**.

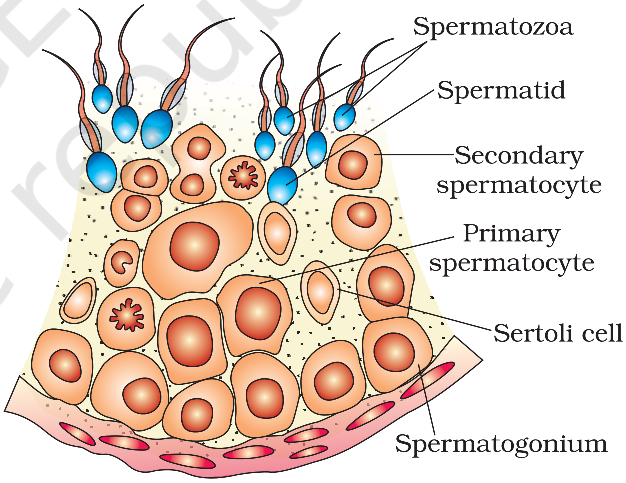


Figure 2.5 Diagrammatic sectional view of a seminiferous tubule (enlarged)

Spermatogenesis starts at the age of puberty due to significant increase in the secretion of gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH). This, if you recall, is a hypothalamic hormone. The increased levels of GnRH then acts at the anterior pituitary gland and stimulates secretion of two gonadotropins – luteinising hormone (LH) and follicle stimulating hormone (FSH). LH acts at the Leydig cells and stimulates synthesis and secretion of androgens. Androgens, in turn, stimulate the process of spermatogenesis. FSH acts on the Sertoli cells and stimulates

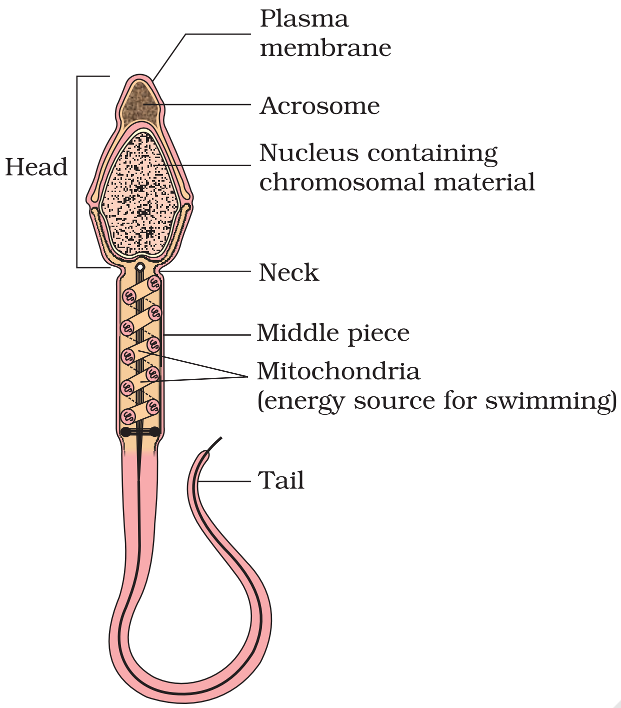

Plasma membrane
Acrosome
Head
Nucleus containing chromosomal material
Neck
Middle piece
Mitochondria (energy source for swimming)
Tail

Figure 2.6 Structure of a sperm

secretion of some factors which help in the process of spermiogenesis.

Let us examine the structure of a sperm. It is a microscopic structure composed of a **head**, **neck,** a **middle piece** and a **tail** (Figure 2.6). A plasma membrane envelops the whole body of sperm. The sperm head contains an elongated haploid nucleus, the anterior portion of which is covered by a cap-like structure, **acrosome**. The acrosome is filled with enzymes that help fertilisation of the ovum. The middle piece possesses numerous mitochondria, which produce energy for the movement of tail that facilitate sperm motility essential for fertilisation. The human male ejaculates about 200 to 300 million sperms during a coitus of which, for normal fertility, at least 60 per cent sperms must have normal shape and size and at least 40 per cent of them must show vigorous motility.

Sperms released from the seminiferous tubules, are transported by the accessory ducts. Secretions of epididymis, vas deferens, seminal vesicle and prostate are essential for maturation and motility of sperms. The seminal plasma along with the sperms constitute the **semen**. The functions of male sex accessory ducts and glands are maintained by the testicular hormones (androgens).

The process of formation of a mature female gamete is called **oogenesis** which is markedly different from spermatogenesis. Oogenesis is initiated during the embryonic development stage when a couple of million gamete mother cells (**oogonia**) are formed within each fetal ovary; no more oogonia are formed and added after birth. These cells start division and enter into prophase-I of the meiotic division and get temporarily arrested at that stage, called **primary oocytes**. Each primary oocyte then gets surrounded by a layer of granulosa cells and is called the **primary follicle** (Figure 2.7). A large number of these follicles degenerate during the phase from birth to puberty. Therefore, at puberty only 60,000-80,000 primary follicles are left in each ovary. The primary follicles get surrounded by more layers of granulosa cells and a new theca and are called **secondary follicles**.

The secondary follicle soon transforms into a tertiary follicle which is characterised by a fluid filled cavity called **antrum**. The theca layer is organised into an inner theca interna and an outer theca externa. It is important to draw your attention that it is at this stage that the primary oocyte within the tertiary follicle grows in size and completes its first meiotic division. It is an unequal division resulting in the formation of a large haploid **secondary oocyte** and a tiny first polar body (Figure 2.8b). The secondary oocyte retains bulk of the nutrient rich cytoplasm of the primary oocyte. *Can you think of any advantage for this?* Does the first polar body born out of first meiotic division divide further or degenerate? At present we are not very certain about this. The tertiary follicle further changes into the mature follicle or **Graafian follicle** (Figure 2.7). The secondary oocyte forms a new membrane called **zona pellucida** surrounding it. The Graafian follicle now ruptures to release the secondary oocyte (ovum) from the ovary by the process called **ovulation**. *Can you identify major differences between spermatogenesis and oogenesis?* A diagrammatic representation of spermatogenesis and oogenesis is given below (Figure 2.8).

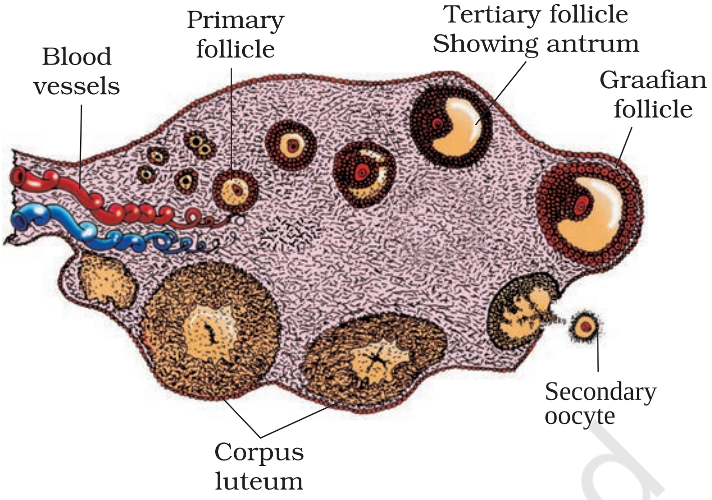
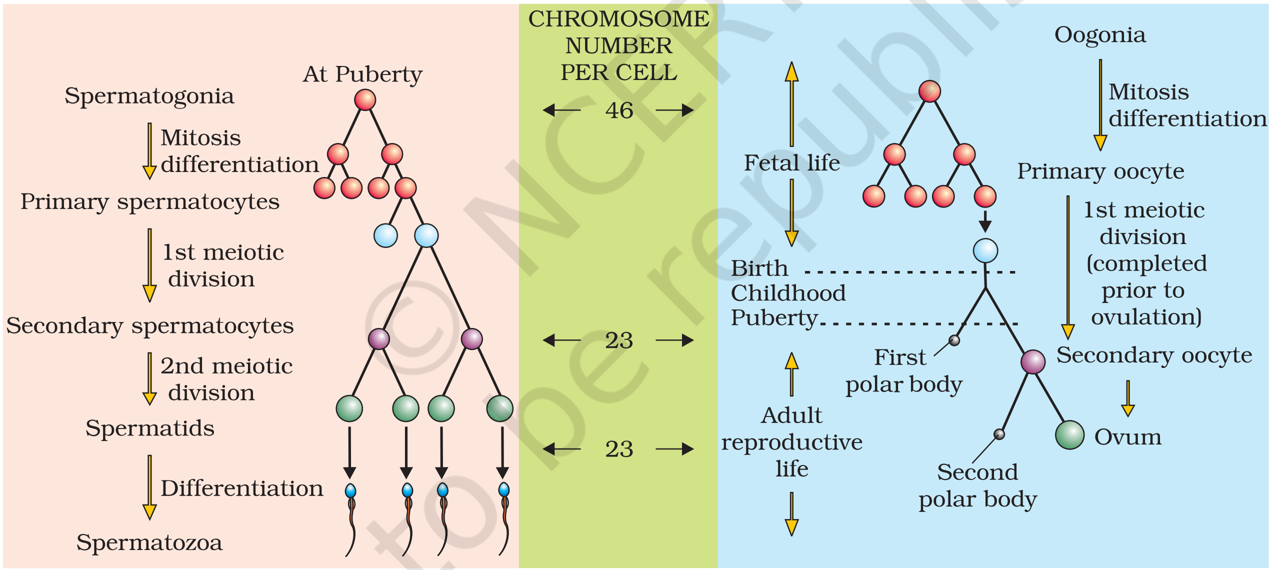

Blood vessels
Primary follicle
Tertiary follicle Showing antrum
Graafian follicle
Secondary oocyte
Corpus luteum

Figure 2.7 Diagrammatic Section view of ovary


At Puberty
Spermatogonia
Mitosis differentiation
Primary spermatocytes
1st meiotic division
Secondary spermatocytes
2nd meiotic division
Spermatids
Differentiation
Spermatozoa
CHROMOSOME NUMBER PER CELL
46
23
23
Fetal life
Birth
Childhood
Puberty
Adult reproductive life
Oogonia
Mitosis differentiation
Primary oocyte
1st meiotic division (completed prior to ovulation)
First polar body
Secondary oocyte
Ovum
Second polar body

(a) (b)

Figure 2.8 Schematic representation of (a) Spermatogenesis; (b) Oogenesis

2.4 MENSTRUAL CYCLE

The reproductive cycle in the female primates (e.g. monkeys, apes and human beings) is called menstrual cycle. The first menstruation begins at puberty and is called **menarche**. In human females, menstruation is repeated at an average interval of about 28/29 days, and the cycle of events starting from one menstruation till the next one is called the **menstrual cycle**. One ovum is released (ovulation) during the middle

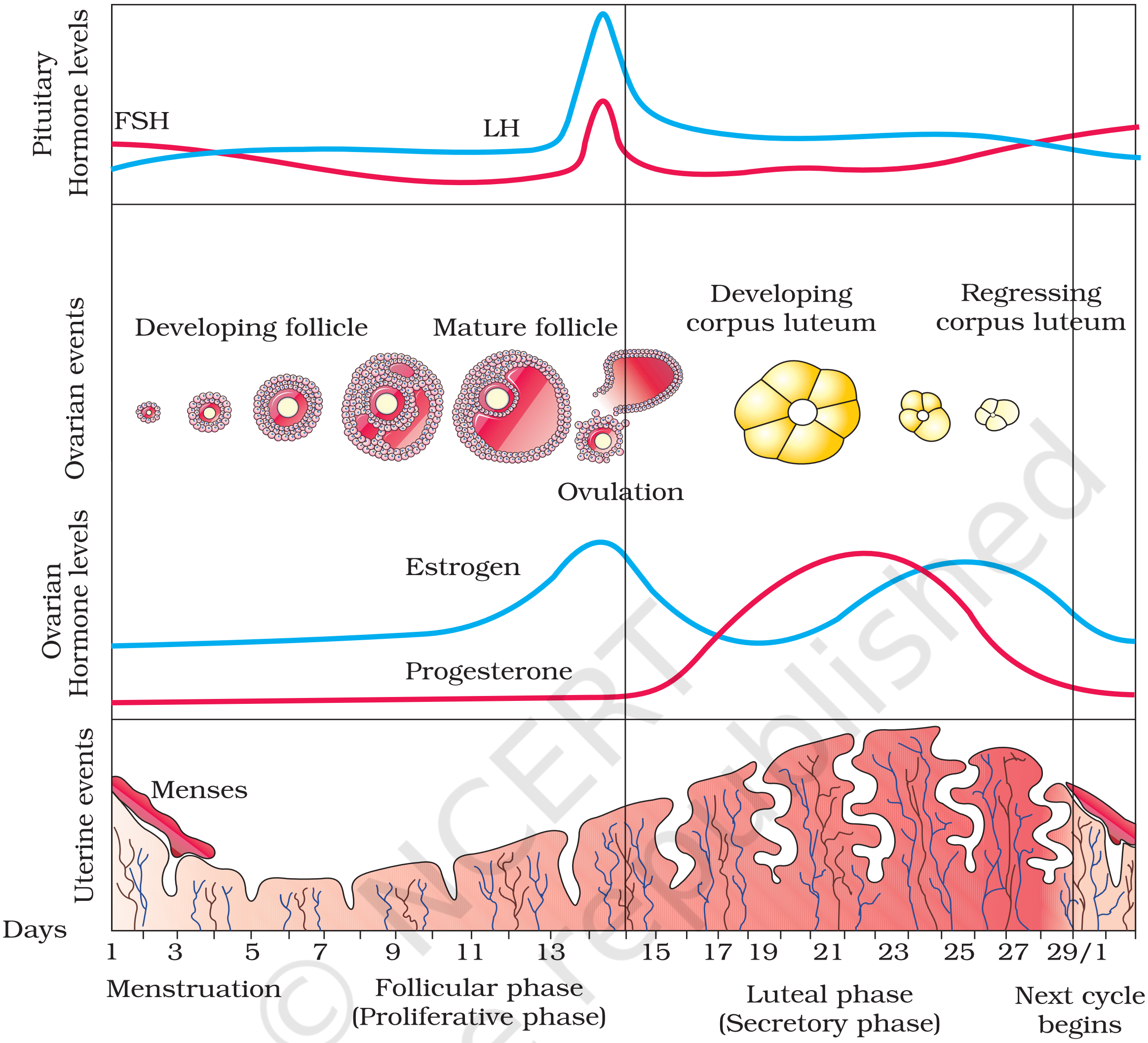

Pituitary Hormone levels
FSH
LH
Ovarian events
Developing follicle
Mature follicle
Developing corpus luteum
Regressing corpus luteum
Ovulation
Ovarian Hormone levels
Estrogen
Progesterone
Uterine events
Menses
Days
1
3
5
7
9
11
13
15
17
19
21
23
25
27
29/1
Menstruation
Follicular phase (Proliferative phase)
Luteal phase (Secretory phase)
Next cycle begins

Figure 2.9 Diagrammatic presentation of various events during a menstrual cycle

of each menstrual cycle. The major events of the menstrual cycle are shown in Figure 2.9. The cycle starts with the menstrual phase, when menstrual flow occurs and it lasts for 3-5 days. The menstrual flow results due to breakdown of endometrial lining of the uterus and its blood vessels which forms liquid that comes out through vagina. Menstruation only occurs if the released ovum is not fertilised. Lack of menstruation may be indicative of pregnancy. However, it may also be caused due to some other underlying causes like stress, poor health etc. The menstrual phase is followed by the follicular phase. During this phase, the primary follicles in the ovary grow to become a fully mature Graafian follicle and simultaneously the endometrium of uterus regenerates through proliferation. These changes in the ovary and the uterus are induced by changes in the levels of pituitary and ovarian hormones (Figure 2.9). The secretion of gonadotropins (LH and FSH) increases gradually during the follicular phase, and stimulates follicular development as well as secretion of estrogens by the growing follicles. Both LH and FSH attain a peak level in the middle of cycle (about 14th day). Rapid secretion of LH leading to its maximum level during the mid-cycle called LH surge induces rupture of Graafian follicle and thereby the release of ovum (**ovulation**). The ovulation (ovulatory phase) is followed by the luteal phase during which the remaining parts of the Graafian follicle transform as the **corpus luteum** (Figure 2.9). The corpus luteum secretes large amounts of progesterone which is essential for maintenance of the endometrium. Such an endometrium is necessary for implantation of the fertilised ovum and other events of pregnancy. During pregnancy all events of the menstrual cycle stop and there is no menstruation. In the absence of fertilisation, the corpus luteum degenerates. This causes disintegration of the endometrium leading to menstruation, marking a new cycle. In human beings, menstrual cycles ceases around 50 years of age; that is termed as **menopause**. Cyclic menstruation is an indicator of normal reproductive phase and extends between menarche and menopause.

Menstrual Hygiene

Maintenance of hygiene and sanitation during menstruation is very important. Take bath and clean yourself regulary. Use sanitary napkins or clean homemade pads. Change sanitary napkins or homemade pads after every 4–5 hrs as per the requirement. Dispose of the used sanitary napkins properly wrapping it with a used paper. Do not throw the used napkins in the drainpipe of toilets or in the open area. After handling the napkin wash hands with soap.

2.5 FERTILISATION AND IMPLANTATION

During copulation (coitus) semen is released by the penis into the vagina (insemination). The motile sperms swim rapidly, pass through the cervix, enter into the uterus and finally reach the ampullary region of the fallopian tube (Figure 2.11b). The ovum released by the ovary is also transported to the ampullary region where fertilisation takes place. Fertilisation can only occur if the ovum and sperms are transported simultaneously to the ampullary region. This is the reason why not all copulations lead to fertilisation and pregnancy.

The process of fusion of a sperm with an ovum is called **fertilisation**. During fertilisation, a sperm comes in contact with the *zona pellucida* layer of the ovum (Figure 2.10) and induces changes in the membrane that block the entry of additional sperms. Thus, it ensures that only one sperm can fertilise an ovum. The secretions of the acrosome help the sperm enter into the cytoplasm of the ovum through the zona pellucida and the plasma

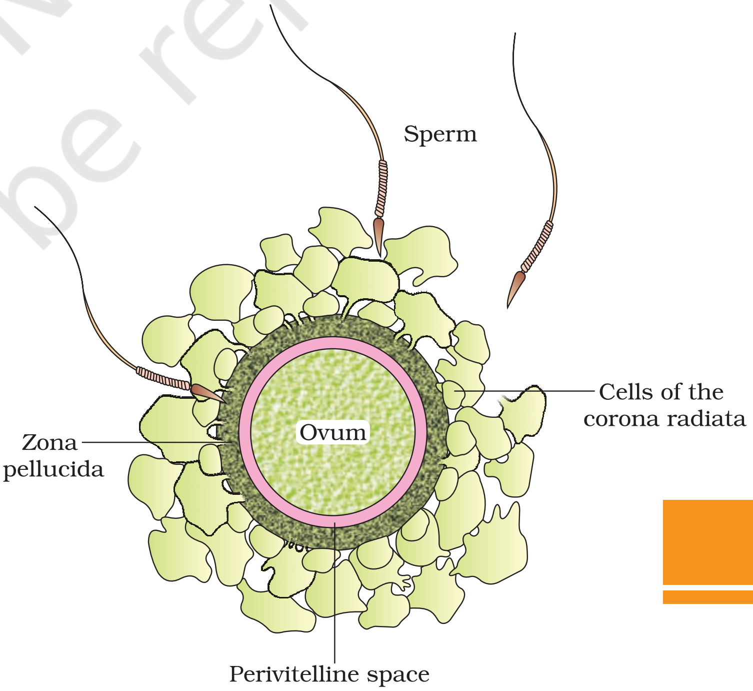


Figure 2.10 Ovum surrounded by few sperms

membrane. This induces the completion of the meiotic division of the secondary oocyte. The second meiotic division is also unequal and results in the formation of a **second polar body** and a haploid ovum (ootid). Soon the haploid nucleus of the sperms and that of the ovum fuse together to form a diploid **zygote**. *How many chromosomes will be there in the zygote?*

One has to remember that the sex of the baby has been decided at this stage itself. Let us see how? As you know the chromosome pattern in the human female is XX and that in the male is XY. Therefore, all the haploid gametes (ova) produced by the female have the sex chromosome X whereas in the male gametes (sperms) the sex chromosome could be either X or Y, hence, 50 per cent of sperms carry the X chromosome while the other 50 per cent carry the Y. After fusion of the male and female gametes the zygote would carry either XX or XY depending on whether the sperm carrying X or Y fertilised the ovum. The zygote carrying XX would develop into a female baby and XY would form a male (you will learn more about the chromosomal patterns in Chapter 5). *That is why, scientifically it is correct to say that the sex of the baby is determined by the father and not by the mother!*

The mitotic division starts as the zygote moves through the isthmus of the oviduct called **cleavage** towards the uterus (Figure 2.11) and forms 2, 4, 8, 16 daughter cells called **blastomeres**. The embryo with 8 to 16

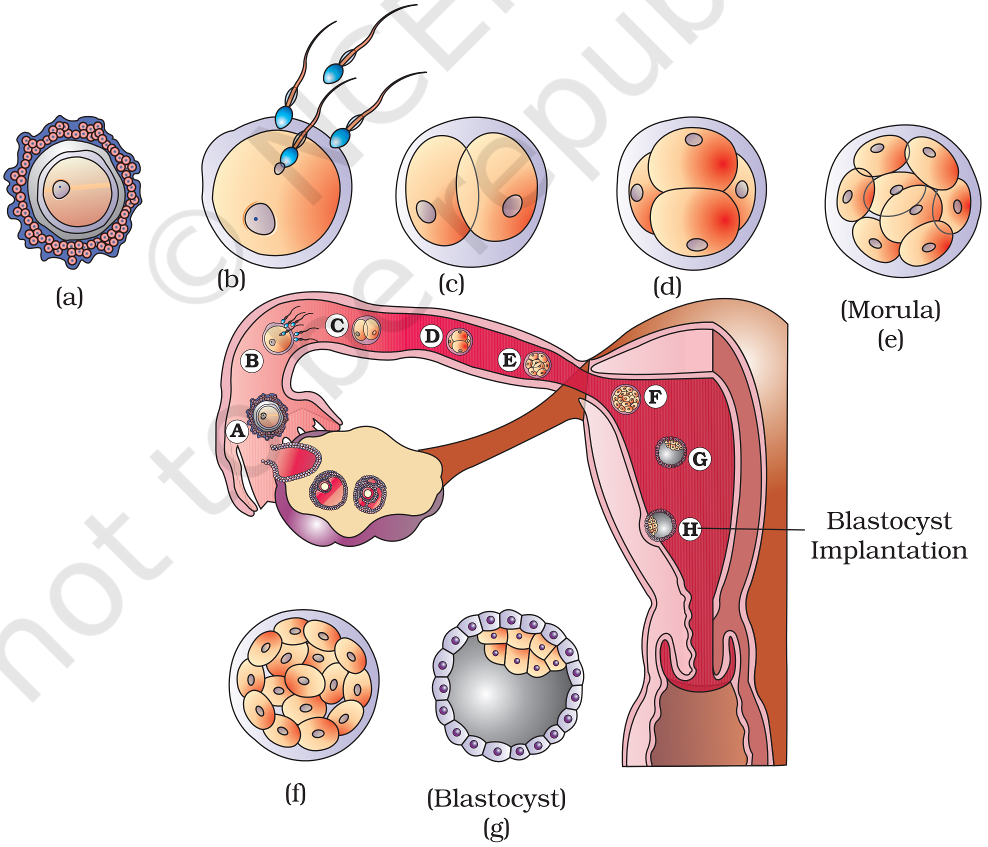


Figure 2.11 Transport of ovum, fertilisation and passage of growing embryo through fallopian tube

blastomeres is called a morula (Figure 2.11e). The morula continues to divide and transforms into blastocyst (Figure 2.11g) as it moves further into the uterus. The blastomeres in the blastocyst are arranged into an outer layer called **trophoblast** and an inner group of cells attached to trophoblast called the **inner cell** mass. The trophoblast layer then gets attached to the endometrium and the inner cell mass gets differentiated as the embryo. After attachment, the uterine cells divide rapidly and covers the blastocyst. As a result, the blastocyst becomes embedded in the endometrium of the uterus (Figure 2.11 step H). This is called **implantation** and it leads to pregnancy.

2.6 PREGNANCY AND EMBRYONIC DEVELOPMENT

After implantation, finger-like projections appear on the trophoblast called **chorionic villi** which are surrounded by the uterine tissue and maternal blood. The chorionic villi and uterine tissue become interdigitated with each other and jointly form a structural and functional unit between developing embryo (foetus) and maternal body called **placenta** (Figure 2.12).

The placenta facilitate the supply of oxygen and nutrients to the embryo and also removal of carbon dioxide and excretory/waste materials produced by the embryo. The placenta is connected to the embryo through an umbilical cord which helps in the transport of substances to and from the embryo. Placenta also acts as an endocrine tissue and produces several hormones like **human chorionic gonadotropin** (hCG), **human placental lactogen** (hPL), **estrogens, progestogens,** etc. In the later phase of pregnancy, a hormone called **relaxin** is also secreted by the ovary. Let us remember that hCG, hPL and relaxin are produced in women only during pregnancy. In addition, during pregnancy the levels of other hormones like estrogens, progestogens, cortisol, prolactin, thyroxine, etc., are increased several-folds in the maternal blood. Increased production of these hormones is essential for supporting the fetal growth, metabolic changes in the mother and maintenance of pregnancy.

Immediately after implantation, the inner cell mass (embryo) differentiates

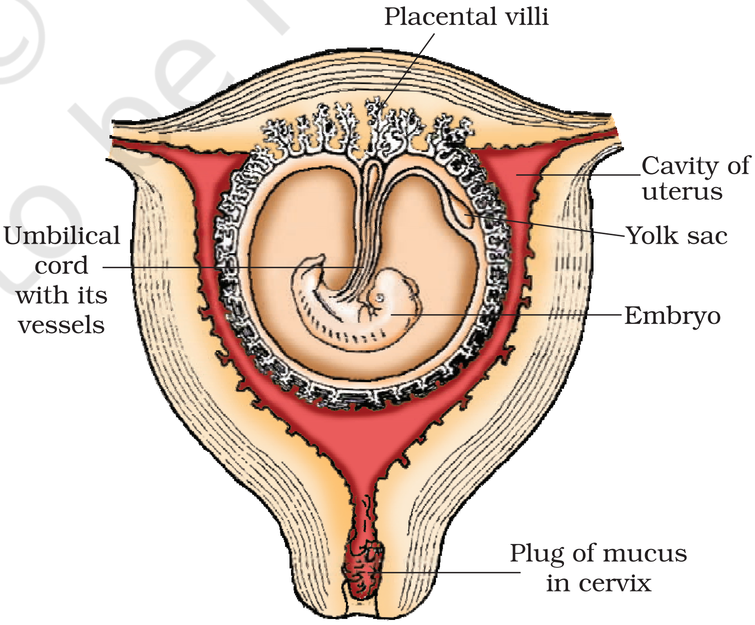


Figure 2.12 The human foetus within the uterus

into an outer layer called **ectoderm** and an inner layer called **endoderm**. A **mesoderm** soon appears between the ectoderm and the endoderm. These three layers give rise to all tissues (organs) in adults. It needs to be mentioned here that the inner cell mass contains certain cells called **stem** cells which have the potency to give rise to all the tissues and organs.

What are the major features of embryonic development at various months of pregnancy? The human pregnancy lasts 9 months. *Do you know for how many months pregnancy last in dogs, elephants, cats?* Find out. In human beings, after one month of pregnancy, the embryo's heart is formed. The first sign of growing foetus may be noticed by listening to the heart sound carefully through the stethoscope. By the end of the second month of pregnancy, the foetus develops limbs and digits. By the end of 12 weeks (first trimester), most of the major organ systems are formed, for example, the limbs and external genital organs are well-developed. The first movements of the foetus and appearance of hair on the head are usually observed during the fifth month. By the end of about 24 weeks (end of second trimester), the body is covered with fine hair, eye-lids separate, and eyelashes are formed. By the end of nine months of pregnancy, the foetus is fully developed and is ready for delivery.

2.7 PARTURITION AND LACTATION

The average duration of human pregnancy is about 9 months which is called the gestation period. Vigorous contraction of the uterus at the end of pregnancy causes expulsion/delivery of the foetus. This process of delivery of the foetus (childbirth) is called **parturition**. Parturition is induced by a complex neuroendocrine mechanism. The signals for parturition originate from the fully developed foetus and the placenta which induce mild uterine contractions called **foetal ejection reflex.** This triggers release of oxytocin from the maternal pituitary. Oxytocin acts on the uterine muscle and causes stronger uterine contractions, which in turn stimulates further secretion of oxytocin. The stimulatory reflex between the uterine contraction and oxytocin secretion continues resulting in stronger and stronger contractions. This leads to expulsion of the baby out of the uterus through the birth canal – parturition. Soon after the infant is delivered, the placenta is also expelled out of the uterus. *What do you think the doctors inject to induce delivery?*

The mammary glands of the female undergo differentiation during pregnancy and starts producing milk towards the end of pregnancy by the process called **lactation**. This helps the mother in feeding the new-born. The milk produced during the initial few days of lactation is called **colostrum** which contains several antibodies absolutely essential to develop resistance for the new-born babies. Breast-feeding during the initial period of infant growth is recommended by doctors for bringing up a healthy baby.

SUMMARY

Humans are sexually reproducing and viviparous. The male reproductive system is composed of a pair of testes, the male sex accessory ducts and the accessory glands and external genitalia. Each testis has about 250 compartments called testicular lobules, and each lobule contains one to three highly coiled seminiferous tubules. Each seminiferous tubule is lined inside by spermatogonia and Sertoli cells. The spermatogonia undergo meiotic divisions leading to sperm formation, while Sertoli cells provide nutrition to the dividing germ cells. The Leydig cells outside the seminiferous tubules, synthesise and secrete testicular hormones called androgens. The male external genitalia is called penis.

The female reproductive system consists of a pair of ovaries, a pair of oviducts, a uterus, a vagina, external genitalia, and a pair of mammary glands. The ovaries produce the female gamete (ovum) and some steroid hormones (ovarian hormones). Ovarian follicles in different stages of development are embedded in the stroma. The oviducts, uterus and vagina are female accessory ducts. The uterus has three layers namely perimetrium, myometrium and endometrium. The female external genitalia includes mons pubis, labia majora, labia minora, hymen and clitoris. The mammary glands are one of the female secondary sexual characteristics.

Spermatogenesis results in the formation of sperms that are transported by the male sex accessory ducts. A normal human sperm is composed of a head, neck, a middle piece and tail. The process of formation of mature female gametes is called oogenesis. The reproductive cycle of female primates is called menstrual cycle. Menstrual cycle starts only after attaining sexual maturation (puberty). During ovulation only one ovum is released per menstrual cycle. The cyclical changes in the ovary and the uterus during menstrual cycle are induced by changes in the levels of pituitary and ovarian hormones. After coitus, sperms are transported to the ampulla, where the sperm fertilises the ovum leading to formation of a diploid zygote. The presence of X or Y chromosome in the sperm determines the sex of the embryo. The zygote undergoes repeated mitotic division to form a blastocyst, which is implanted in the uterus resulting in pregnancy. After nine months of pregnancy, the fully developed foetus is ready for delivery. The process of childbirth is called parturition which is induced by a complex neuroendocrine mechanism involving cortisol, estrogens and oxytocin. Mammary glands differentiate during pregnancy and secrete milk after child-birth. The new-born baby is fed milk by the mother (lactation) during the initial few months of growth.

EXERCISES

1. Fill in the blanks:
   (a) Humans reproduce ___________ (asexually/sexually)
   (b) Humans are ___________ (oviparous, viviparous, ovoviviparous)
   (c) Fertilisation is ___________ in humans (external/internal)
   (d) Male and female gametes are ___________ (diploid/haploid)
   (e) Zygote is ___________ (diploid/haploid)

(f) The process of release of ovum from a mature follicle is called ___________

(g) Ovulation is induced by a hormone called ___________

(h) The fusion of male and female gametes is called ___________

(i) Fertilisation takes place in ___________

(j) Zygote divides to form ___________which is implanted in uterus.

(k) The structure which provides vascular connection between foetus and uterus is called ___________

2. Draw a labelled diagram of male reproductive system.
3. Draw a labelled diagram of female reproductive system.
4. Write two major functions each of testis and ovary.
5. Describe the structure of a seminiferous tubule.
6. What is spermatogenesis? Briefly describe the process of spermatogenesis.
7. Name the hormones involved in regulation of spermatogenesis.
8. Define spermiogenesis and spermiation.
9. Draw a labelled diagram of sperm.
10. What are the major components of seminal plasma?
11. What are the major functions of male accessory ducts and glands?
12. What is oogenesis? Give a brief account of oogenesis.
13. Draw a labelled diagram of a section through ovary.
14. Draw a labelled diagram of a Graafian follicle?
15. Name the functions of the following:
    - (a) Corpus luteum
    - (b) Endometrium
    - (c) Acrosome
    - (d) Sperm tail
    - (e) Fimbriae
16. Identify True/False statements. Correct each false statement to make it true.
    - (a) Androgens are produced by Sertoli cells. (True/False)
    - (b) Spermatozoa get nutrition from Sertoli cells. (True/False)
    - (c) Leydig cells are found in ovary. (True/False)
    - (d) Leydig cells synthesise androgens. (True/False)
    - (e) Oogenesis takes place in corpus luteum. (True/False)
    - (f) Menstrual cycle ceases during pregnancy. (True/False)
    - (g) Presence or absence of hymen is not a reliable indicator of virginity or sexual experience. (True/False)
17. What is menstrual cycle? Which hormones regulate menstrual cycle?
18. What is parturition? Which hormones are involved in induction of parturition?
19. In our society the women are often blamed for giving birth to daughters. Can you explain why this is not correct?
20. How many eggs are released by a human ovary in a month? How many eggs do you think would have been released if the mother gave birth to identical twins? Would your answer change if the twins born were fraternal?
21. How many eggs do you think were released by the ovary of a female dog which gave birth to 6 puppies?

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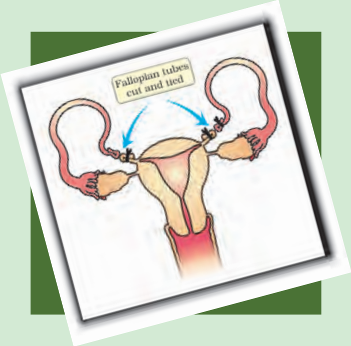


CHAPTER 3

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

3.1 *Reproductive Health – Problems and Strategies*
3.2 *Population Explosion and Birth Control*
3.3 *Medical Termination of Pregnancy*
3.4 *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*
3.5 *Infertility*

You have learnt about human reproductive system and its functions in Chapter 2. Now, let's discuss a closely related topic – reproductive health. *What do we understand by this term?* The term simply refers to healthy reproductive organs with normal functions. However, it has a broader perspective and includes the emotional and social aspects of reproduction also. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), reproductive health means a total well-being in all aspects of reproduction, i.e., physical, emotional, behavioural and social. Therefore, a society with people having physically and functionally normal reproductive organs and normal emotional and behavioural interactions among them in all sex-related aspects might be called reproductively healthy. Why is it significant to maintain reproductive health and what are the methods taken up to achieve it? Let us examine them.

3.1 REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH – PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIES

India was amongst the first countries in the world to initiate action plans and programmes at a national level to attain total reproductive health as a social goal. These programmes called 'family planning' were initiated in 1951 and were periodically assessed over the past decades. Improved programmes covering wider reproduction-related areas are currently in operation under the popular name 'Reproductive and Child Health Care (RCH) programmes'. Creating awareness among people about various reproduction related aspects and providing facilities and support for building up a reproductively healthy society are the major tasks under these programmes.

With the help of audio-visual and the print-media governmental and non-governmental agencies have taken various steps to create awareness among the people about reproduction-related aspects. Parents, other close relatives, teachers and friends, also have a major role in the dissemination of the above information. Introduction of sex education in schools should also be encouraged to provide right information to the young so as to discourage children from believing in myths and having misconceptions about sex-related aspects. Proper information about reproductive organs, adolescence and related changes, safe and hygienic sexual practices, sexually transmitted diseases (STD), AIDS, etc., would help people, especially those in the adolescent age group to lead a reproductively healthy life. Educating people, especially fertile couples and those in marriageable age group, about available birth control options, care of pregnant mothers, post-natal care of the mother and child, importance of breast feeding, equal opportunities for the male and the female child, etc., would address the importance of bringing up socially conscious healthy families of desired size. Awareness of problems due to uncontrolled population growth, social evils like sex-abuse and sex-related crimes, etc., need to be created to enable people to think and take up necessary steps to prevent them and thereby build up a socially responsible and healthy society.

Successful implementation of various action plans to attain reproductive health requires strong infrastructural facilities, professional expertise and material support. These are essential to provide medical assistance and care to people in reproduction-related problems like pregnancy, delivery, STDs, abortions, contraception, menstrual problems, infertility, etc. Implementation of better techniques and new strategies from time to time are also required to provide more efficient care and assistance to people. Statutory ban on **amniocentesis** for sex-determination to legally check increasing menace of female foeticides, massive child immunisation, etc., are some programmes that merit mention in this connection. In aminocentesis some of the amniotic fluid of the developing foetus is taken to analyse the fetal cells and dissolved substances. This procedure is used to test for the presence of certain genetic disorders such as, down syndrome, haemoplilia, sickle-cell anemia, etc., determine the survivability of the foetus.

Research on various reproduction-related areas are encouraged and supported by governmental and non-governmental agencies to find out new methods and/or to improve upon the existing ones. *Do you know that 'Saheli'–a new oral contraceptive for the females–was developed* *by scientists at Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) in Lucknow, India?* Better awareness about sex related matters, increased number of medically assisted deliveries and better post-natal care leading to decreased maternal and infant mortality rates, increased number of couples with small families, better detection and cure of STDs and overall increased medical facilities for all sex-related problems, etc. all indicate improved reproductive health of the society.

3.2 Population Stabilisation and Birth Control

In the last century an all-round development in various fields significantly improved the quality of life of the people. However, increased health facilities along with better living conditions had an explosive impact on the growth of population. The world population which was around 2 billion (2000 million) in 1900 rocketed to about 6 billion by 2000 and 7.2 billion in 2011. A similar trend was observed in India too. Our population which was approximately 350 million at the time of our independence reached close to the billion mark by 2000 and crossed 1.2 billion in May 2011. A rapid decline in death rate, **maternal mortality rate** (MMR) and **infant mortality rate** (IMR) as well as an increase in number of people in reproducible age are probable reasons for this. Through our Reproductive Child Health (RCH) programme, though we could bring down the population growth rate, it was only marginal. According to the 2011 census report, the population growth rate was less than 2 per cent, i.e., 20/1000/year, a rate at which our population could increase rapidly. Such an alarming growth rate could lead to an absolute scarcity of even the basic requirements, i.e., food, shelter and clothing, in spite of significant progress made in those areas. Therefore, the government was forced to take up serious measures to check this population growth rate.

The most important step to overcome this problem is to motivate smaller families by using various contraceptive methods. You might have seen advertisements in the media as well as posters/bills, etc., showing a happy couple with two children with a slogan *Hum Do Hamare Do* (we two, our two). Many couples, mostly the young, urban, working ones have even adopted an 'one child norm'. Statutory raising of marriageable age of the female to 18 years and that of males to 21 years, and incentives given to couples with small families are two of the other measures taken to tackle this problem. Let us describe some of the commonly used contraceptive methods, which help prevent unwanted pregnancies.

An ideal contraceptive should be user-friendly, easily available, effective and reversible with no or least side-effects. It also should in no way interfere with the sexual drive, desire and/or the sexual act of the user. A wide range of contraceptive methods are presently available which could be broadly grouped into the following categories, namely Natural/Traditional, Barrier, IUDs, Oral contraceptives, Injectables, Implants and Surgical methods.

Natural methods work on the principle of avoiding chances of ovum and sperms meeting. **Periodic abstinence** is one such method in which the couples avoid or abstain from coitus from day 10 to 17 of the menstrual cycle when ovulation could be expected. As chances of fertilisation are very high during this period, it is called the fertile period. Therefore, by abstaining from coitus during this period, conception could be prevented. **Withdrawal** or **coitus interruptus** is another method in which the male partner withdraws his penis from the vagina just before ejaculation so as to avoid insemination. **Lactational amenorrhea** (absence of menstruation) method is based on the fact that ovulation and therefore the cycle do not occur during the period of intense lactation following parturition. Therefore, as long as the mother breast-feeds the child fully, chances of conception are almost nil. However, this method has been reported to be effective only upto a maximum period of six months following parturition. As no medicines or devices are used in these methods, side effects are almost nil. Chances of failure, though, of this method are also high.

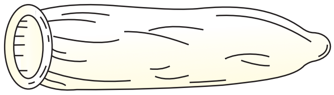


Figure 3.1(a) Condom for male

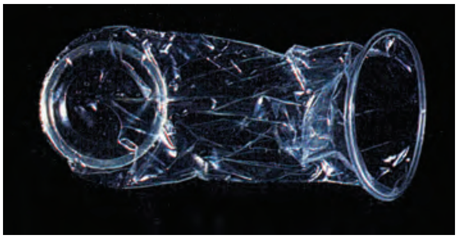


Figure 3.1(b) Condom for female

In **barrier** methods, ovum and sperms are prevented from physically meeting with the help of barriers. Such methods are available for both males and females. **Condoms** (Figure 3.1 a, b) are barriers made of thin rubber/ latex sheath that are used to cover the penis in the male or vagina and cervix in the female, just before coitus so that the ejaculated semen would not enter into the female reproductive tract. This can prevent conception. 'Nirodh' is a popular brand of condom for the male. Use of condoms has increased in recent years due to its additional benefit of protecting the user from contracting STIs and AIDS. Both the male and the female condoms are disposable, can be self-inserted and thereby gives privacy to the user. **Diaphragms, cervical caps** and **vaults** are also barriers made of rubber that are inserted into the female reproductive tract to cover the cervix during coitus. They prevent conception by blocking the entry of sperms through the cervix. They are reusable. Spermicidal creams, jellies and foams are usually used alongwith these barriers to increase their contraceptive efficiency.

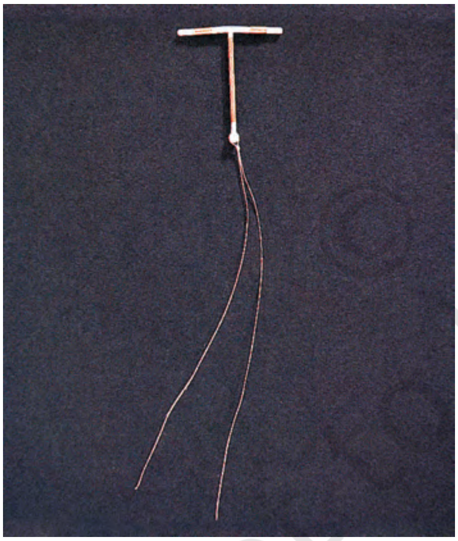


Figure 3.2. Copper T (CuT)

Another effective and popular method is the use of **Intra Uterine Devices (IUDs)**. These devices are inserted by doctors or expert nurses in the uterus through vagina. These Intra Uterine Devices are presently available as the non-medicated IUDs (e.g., Lippes loop), copper releasing IUDs (CuT, Cu7, Multiload 375) and the hormone releasing IUDs (Progestasert, LNG-20) (Figure 3.2). IUDs increase phagocytosis of sperms within the uterus and the Cu ions released suppress sperm motility and the fertilising capacity of sperms. The hormone releasing IUDs, in addition,

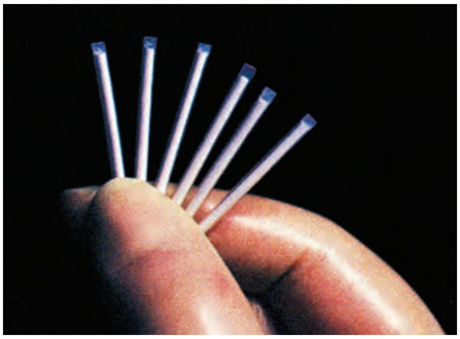


Figure 3.3 Implants

make the uterus unsuitable for implantation and the cervix hostile to the sperms. IUDs are ideal contraceptives for the females who want to delay pregnancy and/or space children. It is one of most widely accepted methods of contraception in India.

Oral administration of small doses of either progestogens or progestogen–estrogen combinations is another contraceptive method used by the females. They are used in the form of tablets and hence are popularly called the **pills**. Pills have to be taken daily for a period of 21 days starting preferably within the first five days of menstrual cycle. After a gap of 7 days (during which menstruation occurs) it has to be repeated in the same pattern till the female desires to prevent conception. They inhibit ovulation and implantation as well as alter the quality of cervical mucus to prevent/retard entry of sperms. Pills are very effective with lesser side effects and are well accepted by the females. *Saheli*–the new oral contraceptive for the females contains a non-steroidal preparation. It is a 'once a week' pill with very few side effects and high contraceptive value.

Progestogens alone or in combination with estrogen can also be used by females as injections or implants under the skin (Figure 3.3). Their mode of action is similar to that of pills and their effective periods are much longer. Administration of progestogens or progestogen-estrogen combinations or IUDs within 72 hours of coitus have been found to be very effective as emergency contraceptives as they could be used to avoid possible pregnancy due to rape or casual unprotected intercourse.

Surgical methods, also called **sterilisation**, are generally advised for the male/female partner as a terminal method to prevent any more

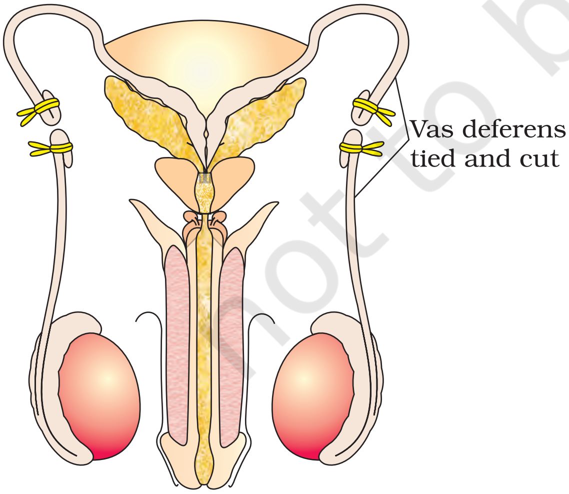


Figure 3.4 (a) Vasectomy

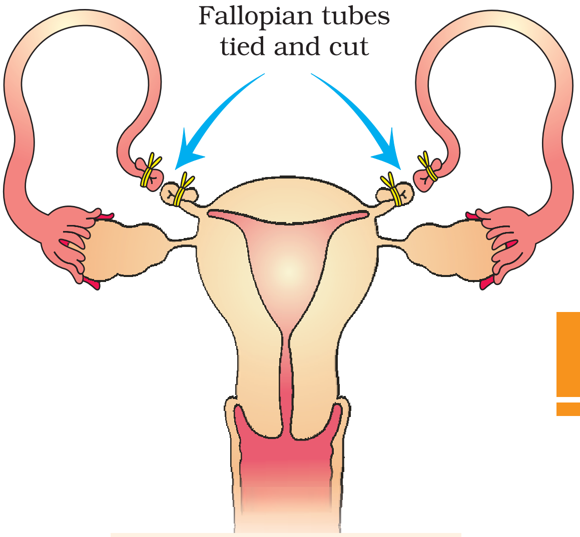


Figure 3.4 (b) Tubectomy

pregnancies. Surgical intervention blocks gamete transport and thereby prevent conception. Sterilisation procedure in the male is called 'vasectomy' and that in the female, 'tubectomy'. In vasectomy, a small part of the vas deferens is removed or tied up through a small incision on the scrotum (Figure 3.4a) whereas in tubectomy, a small part of the fallopian tube is removed (Figure 3.4b) or tied up through a small incision in the abdomen or through vagina. These techniques are highly effective but their reversibility is very poor.

It needs to be emphasised that the selection of a suitable contraceptive method and its use should always be undertaken in consultation with qualified medical professionals. One must also remember that contraceptives are not regular requirements for the maintenance of reproductive health. In fact, they are practiced against a natural reproductive event, i.e., conception/pregnancy. One is forced to use these methods either to prevent pregnancy or to delay or space pregnancy due to personal reasons. No doubt, the widespread use of these methods have a significant role in checking uncontrolled growth of population. However, their possible ill-effects like nausea, abdominal pain, breakthrough bleeding, irregular menstrual bleeding or even breast cancer, though not very significant, should not be totally ignored.

3.3 Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP)

Intentional or voluntary termination of pregnancy before full term is called **medical termination of pregnancy** (MTP) or induced abortion. Nearly 45 to 50 million MTPs are performed in a year all over the world which accounts to 1/5th of the total number of conceived pregnancies in a year. Whether to accept / legalise MTP or not is being debated upon in many countries due to emotional, ethical, religious and social issues involved in it. Government of India legalised MTP in 1971 with some strict conditions to avoid its misuse. Such restrictions are all the more important to check indiscriminate and illegal female foeticides which are reported to be high in India.

Why MTP? Obviously the answer is–to get rid of unwanted pregnancies either due to casual unprotected intercourse or failure of the contraceptive used during coitus or rapes. MTPs are also essential in certain cases where continuation of the pregnancy could be harmful or even fatal either to the mother or to the foetus or both.

MTPs are considered relatively safe during the first trimester, i.e., upto 12 weeks of pregnancy. Second trimester abortions are much more riskier. One disturbing trend observed is that a majority of the MTPs are performed illegally by unqualified quacks which are not only unsafe but could be fatal too. Another dangerous trend is the misuse of amniocentesis to determine the sex of the unborn child. Frequently, if the foetus is found to be female, it is followed by MTP- this is totally against what is legal.

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Act, 2017 was enacted by the government of India with the intension of reducing the incidence of illegal abortion and consequent maternal mortality and morbidity. According to this Act, a pregnancy may be terminated on certain considered grounds within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy on the opinion of one registered medical practitioner. If the pregnancy has lasted more than 12 weeks, but fewer than 24 weeks, two registered medical practitioners must be of the opinion, formed in good faith, that the required ground exist. The grounds for such termination of pregnancies are:

(i) The continuation of the pregnancy would involve a risk to the life of the pregnant woman or of grave injury physical or mental health; or

(ii There is a substantial risk that of the child were born, it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped.

Such practices should be avoided because these are dangerous both for the young mother and the foetus. Effective counselling on the need to avoid unprotected coitus and the risk factors involved in illegal abortions as well as providing more health care facilities could reverse the mentioned unhealthy trend.

3.4 Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

Infections or diseases which are transmitted through sexual intercourse are collectively called sexually transmitted infections (STI) or venereal diseases (VD) or reproductive tract infections (RTI). Gonorrhoea, syphilis, genital herpes, chlamydiasis, genital warts, trichomoniasis, hepatitis-B and of course, the most discussed infection in the recent years, HIV leading to AIDS are some of the common STIs. Among these, HIV infection is most dangerous and is discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

Some of these infections like hepatitis–B and HIV can also be transmitted by sharing of injection needles, surgical instruments, etc., with infected persons, transfusion of blood, or from an infected mother to the foetus too. Except for hepatitis-B, genital herpes and HIV infections, other diseases are completely curable if detected early and treated properly. Early symptoms of most of these are minor and include itching, fluid discharge, slight pain, swellings, etc., in the genital region. Infected females may often be asymptomatic and hence, may remain undetected for long. Absence or less significant symptoms in the early stages of infection and the social stigma attached to the STIs, deter the infected persons from going for timely detection and proper treatment. This could lead to complications later, which include pelvic inflammatory diseases (PID), abortions, still births, ectopic pregnancies, infertility or even cancer of the reproductive tract. STIs are a major threat to a healthy society. Therefore, prevention or early detection and cure of these diseases are given prime consideration under the reproductive health-care programmes. Though all persons are vulnerable to these infections, their incidences are reported to be very high among persons in the age group of 15-24 years – the age group to which you also belong. There is no reason to panic because prevention is possible. One could be free of these infections by following the simple principles given below:

(i) Avoid sex with unknown partners/multiple partners.
(ii) Always try to use condoms during coitus.
(iii) In case of doubt, one should go to a qualified doctor for early detection and get complete treatment if diagnosed with infection.

3.5 Infertility

A discussion on reproductive health is incomplete without a mention of infertility. A large number of couples all over the world including India are infertile, i.e., they are unable to produce children inspite of unprotected sexual co-habitation. The reasons for this could be many–physical, congenital, diseases, drugs, immunological or even psychological. In India, often the female is blamed for the couple being childless, but more often than not, the problem lies in the male partner. Specialised health care units (infertility clinics, etc.) could help in diagnosis and corrective treatment of some of these disorders and enable these couples to have children. However, where such corrections are not possible, the couples could be assisted to have children through certain special techniques commonly known as **assisted reproductive technologies** (ART).

***In vitro* fertilisation** (IVF–fertilisation outside the body in almost similar conditions as that in the body) followed by **embryo transfer** (ET) is one of such methods. In this method, popularly known as **test tube baby** programme, ova from the wife/donor (female) and sperms from the husband/donor (male) are collected and are induced to form zygote under simulated conditions in the laboratory. The zygote or early embryos (with upto 8 blastomeres) could then be transferred into the fallopian tube (ZIFT–**zygote intra fallopian transfer**) and embryos with more than 8 blastomeres, into the uterus (IUT – **intra uterine transfer**), to complete its further development. Embryos formed by **in-vivo fertilisation** (fusion of gametes within the female) also could be used for such transfer to assist those females who cannot conceive.

Transfer of an ovum collected from a donor into the fallopian tube (GIFT – **gamete intra fallopian transfer**) of another female who cannot produce one, but can provide suitable environment for fertilisation and further development is another method attempted. **Intra cytoplasmic sperm injection** (ICSI) is another specialised procedure to form an embryo in the laboratory in which a sperm is directly injected into the ovum. Infertility cases either due to inability of the male partner to inseminate the female or due to very low sperm counts in the ejaculates, could be corrected by **artificial insemination** (AI) technique. In this technique, the semen collected either from the husband or a healthy donor is artificially introduced either into the vagina or into the uterus (IUI – **intra-uterine insemination**) of the female.

Though options are many, all these techniques require extremely high precision handling by specialised professionals and expensive instrumentation. Therefore, these facilities are presently available only in very few centres in the country. Obviously their benefits is affordable to only a limited number of people. Emotional, religious and social factors are also deterrents in the adoption of these methods. Since the ultimate aim of all these procedures is to have children, in India we have so many orphaned and destitute children, who would probably not survive till maturity, unless taken care of. Our laws permit legal adoption and it is as yet, one of the best methods for couples looking for parenthood.

SUMMARY

Reproductive health refers to a total well-being in all aspects of reproduction, i.e., physical, emotional, behavioural and social. Our nation was the first nation in the world to initiate various action plans at national level towards attaining a reproductively healthy society.

Counselling and creating awareness among people about reproductive organs, adolescence and associated changes, safe and hygienic sexual practices, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including AIDS, etc., is the primary step towards reproductive health. Providing medical facilities and care to the problems like menstrual irregularities, pregnancy related aspects, delivery, medical termination of pregnancy, STIs, birth control, infertility, post natal child and maternal management is another important aspect of the Reproductive and Child Health Care programmes.

An overall improvement in reproductive health has taken place in our country as indicated by reduced maternal and infant mortality rates, early detection and cure of STIs, assistance to infertile couples, etc. Improved health facilities and better living conditions promoted an explosive growth of population. Such a growth necessitated intense propagation of contraceptive methods. Various contraceptive options are available now such as natural, traditional, barrier, IUDs, pills, injectables, implants and surgical methods. Though contraceptives are not regular requirements for reproductive health, one is forced to use them to avoid pregnancy or to delay or space pregnancy.

Medical termination of pregnancy is legalised in our country. MTP is generally performed to get rid of unwanted pregnancy due to rapes, casual relationship, etc., as also in cases when the continuation of pregnancy could be harmful or even fatal to either the mother, or the foetus or both.

Infections or diseases transmitted through sexual intercourse are called Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STIs). Pelvic Inflammatory Diseases (PIDs), still birth, infertility are some of the complications of them. Early detection facilitate better cure of these diseases. Avoiding sexual intercourse with unknown/multiple partners, use of condoms during coitus are some of the simple precautions to avoid contracting STIs.

Inability to conceive or produce children even after 2 years of unprotected sexual cohabitation is called infertility. Various methods are now available to help such couples. *In Vitro* fertilisation followed by transfer of embryo into the female genital tract is one such method and is commonly known as the 'Test Tube Baby' Programme.

EXERCISES

1. What do you think is the significance of reproductive health in a society?
2. Suggest the aspects of reproductive health which need to be given special attention in the present scenario.
3. Is sex education necessary in schools? Why?
4. Do you think that reproductive health in our country has improved in the past 50 years? If yes, mention some such areas of improvement.
5. What are the suggested reasons for population explosion?
6. Is the use of contraceptives justified? Give reasons.
7. Removal of gonads cannot be considered as a contraceptive option. Why?
8. Amniocentesis for sex determination is banned in our country. Is this ban necessary? Comment.
9. Suggest some methods to assist infertile couples to have children.
10. What are the measures one has to take to prevent from contracting STDs?
11. State True/False with explanation
    (a) Abortions could happen spontaneously too. (True/False)
    (b) Infertility is defined as the inability to produce a viable offspring and is always due to abnormalities/defects in the female partner. (True/False)
    (c) Complete lactation could help as a natural method of contraception. (True/False)
    (d) Creating awareness about sex related aspects is an effective method to improve reproductive health of the people. (True/False)
12. Correct the following statements :
    (a) Surgical methods of contraception prevent gamete formation.
    (b) All sexually transmitted diseases are completely curable.
    (c) Oral pills are very popular contraceptives among the rural women.
    (d) In E. T. techniques, embryos are always transferred into the uterus.

UNIT VII

GENETICS AND EVOLUTION

Chapter 4
Principles of Inheritance
and Variation

Chapter 5
Molecular Basis of Inheritance

Chapter 6
Evolution

The work of Mendel and others who followed him gave us an idea of inheritance patterns. However the nature of those 'factors' which determine the phenotype was not very clear. As these 'factors' represent the genetic basis of inheritance, understanding the structure of genetic material and the structural basis of genotype and phenotype conversion became the focus of attention in biology for the next century. The entire body of molecular biology was a consequent development with major contributions from Watson, Crick, Nirenberg, Khorana, Kornbergs (father and son), Benzer, Monod, Brenner, etc. A parallel problem being tackled was the mechanism of evolution. Awareness in the areas of molecular genetics, structural biology and bio informatics have enriched our understanding of the molecular basis of evolution. In this unit the structure and function of DNA and the story and theory of evolution have been examined and explained.

James Dewey Watson was born in Chicago on 6 April 1928. In 1947, he received B.Sc. degree in Zoology. During these years his interest in bird-watching had matured into a serious desire to learn genetics. This became possible when he received a Fellowship for graduate study in Zoology at Indiana University, Bloomington, where he received his Ph.D. degree in 1950 on a study of the effect of hard X-rays on bacteriophage multiplication.

He met Crick and discovered their common interest in solving the DNA structure. Their first serious effort, was unsatisfactory. Their second effort based upon more experimental evidence and better appreciation of the nucleic acid literature, resulted, early in March 1953, in the proposal of the complementary double-helical configuration.

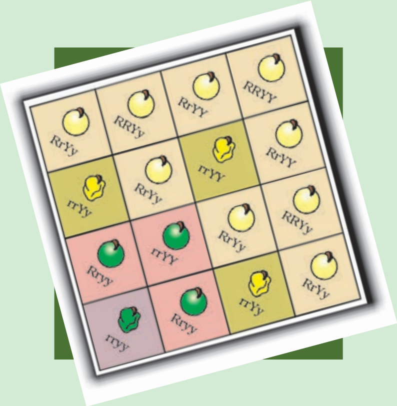
JAMES WATSON
FRANCIS CRICK

Francis Harry Compton Crick was born on 8 June 1916, at Northampton, England. He studied physics at University College, London and obtained a B.Sc. in 1937. He completed Ph.D. in 1954 on a thesis entitled "X-ray Diffraction: Polypeptides and Proteins".

A critical influence in Crick's career was his friendship with J. D. Watson, then a young man of 23, leading in 1953 to the proposal of the double-helical structure for DNA and the replication scheme. Crick was made an F.R.S. in 1959.

The honours to Watson with Crick include: the John Collins Warren Prize of the Massachusetts General Hospital, in 1959; the Lasker Award, in 1960; the Research Corporation Prize, in 1962 and above all, the Nobel Prize in 1962.

CHAPTER 4



PRINCIPLES OF INHERITANCE AND VARIATION

4.1 *Mendel's Laws of Inheritance*
4.2 *Inheritance of One Gene*
4.3 *Inheritance of Two Genes*
4.4 *Sex Determination*
4.5 *Mutation*
4.6 *Genetic Disorders*

Have you ever wondered why an elephant always gives birth only to a baby elephant and not some other animal? Or why a mango seed forms only a mango plant and not any other plant?

Given that they do, are the offspring identical to their parents? Or do they show differences in some of their characteristics? Have you ever wondered why siblings sometimes look so similar to each other? Or sometimes even so different?

These and several related questions are dealt with, scientifically, in a branch of biology known as Genetics. This subject deals with the inheritance, as well as the variation of characters from parents to offspring. Inheritance is the process by which characters are passed on from parent to progeny; it is the basis of heredity. Variation is the degree by which progeny differ from their parents.

Humans knew from as early as 8000-1000 B.C. that one of the causes of variation was hidden in sexual reproduction. They exploited the variations that were naturally present in the wild populations of plants and animals to selectively breed and select for organisms that possessed desirable characters. For example, through artificial selection and domestication from ancestral wild cows, we have well-known Indian breeds, e.g., Sahiwal cows in Punjab. We must, however, recognise that though our ancestors knew about the inheritance of characters and variation, they had very little idea about the scientific basis of these phenomena.

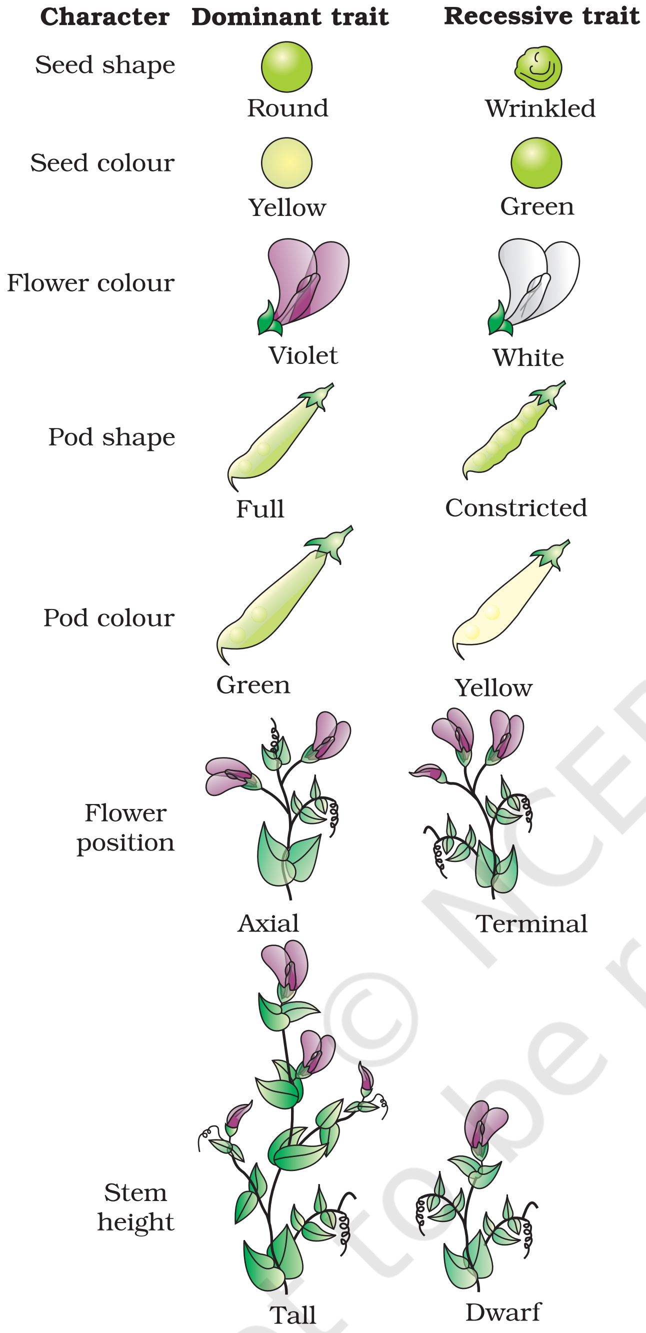

Character
Dominant trait
Recessive trait
Seed shape
Round
Wrinkled
Seed colour
Yellow
Green
Flower colour
Violet
White
Pod shape
Full
Constricted
Pod colour
Green
Yellow
Flower position
Axial
Terminal
Stem height
Tall
Dwarf

Figure 4.1 Seven pairs of contrasting traits in pea plant studied by Mendel

4.1 MENDEL'S LAWS OF INHERITANCE

It was during the mid-nineteenth century that headway was made in the understanding of inheritance. Gregor Mendel, conducted hybridisation experiments on garden peas for seven years (1856-1863) and proposed the laws of inheritance in living organisms. During Mendel's investigations into inheritance patterns it was for the first time that statistical analysis and mathematical logic were applied to problems in biology. His experiments had a large sampling size, which gave greater credibility to the data that he collected. Also, the confirmation of his inferences from experiments on successive generations of his test plants, proved that his results pointed to general rules of inheritance rather than being unsubstantiated ideas. Mendel investigated characters in the garden pea plant that were manifested as two opposing traits, e.g., tall or dwarf plants, yellow or green seeds. This allowed him to set up a basic framework of rules governing inheritance, which was expanded on by later scientists to account for all the diverse natural observations and the complexity inherent in them.

Mendel conducted such artificial pollination/cross pollination experiments using several true-breeding pea lines. A true-breeding line is one that, having undergone continuous self-pollination, shows the stable trait inheritance and expression for several generations. Mendel selected 14 true-breeding pea plant varieties, as pairs which were similar except for one character with contrasting traits. Some of the contrasting traits selected were smooth or wrinkled seeds, yellow or green seeds, inflated (full) or constricted green or yellow pods and tall or dwarf plants (Figure 4.1, Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Contrasting Traits Studied by Mendel in Pea

S.No.	Characters	Contrasting Traits
1.	*Stem height*	*Tall/dwarf*
2.	*Flower colour*	*Violet/white*
3.	*Flower position*	*Axial/terminal*
4.	*Pod shape*	*Inflated/constricted*
5.	*Pod colour*	*Green/yellow*
6.	*Seed shape*	*Round/wrinkled*
7.	*Seed colour*	*Yellow/green*

4.2 INHERITANCE OF ONE GENE

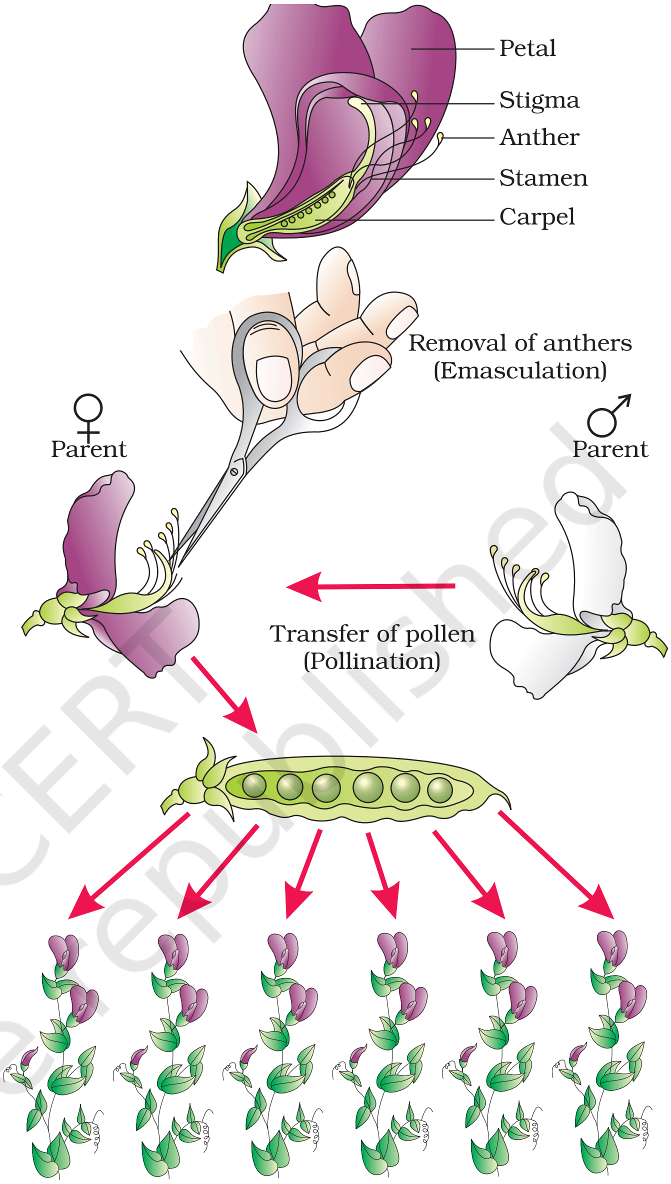

Petal
Stigma
Anther
Stamen
Carpel
Removal of anthers (Emasculation)
♀ Parent
♂ Parent
Transfer of pollen (Pollination)

Figure 4.2 Steps in making a cross in pea

Let us take the example of one such hybridisation experiment carried out by Mendel where he crossed tall and dwarf pea plants to study the inheritance of one gene (Figure 4.2). He collected the seeds produced as a result of this cross and grew them to generate plants of the first hybrid generation. This generation is also called the **Filial$_1$ progeny** or the **F$_1$**. Mendel observed that all the F$_1$ progeny plants were tall, like one of its parents; none were dwarf (Figure 4.3). He made similar observations for the other pairs of traits – he found that the F$_1$ always resembled either one of the parents, and that the trait of the other parent was not seen in them.

Mendel then self-pollinated the tall F$_1$ plants and to his surprise found that in the Filial$_2$ generation some of the offspring were 'dwarf'; the character that was not seen in the F$_1$ generation was now expressed. The proportion of plants that were dwarf were 1/4th of the F$_2$ plants while 3/4th of the F$_2$ plants were tall. The tall and dwarf traits were identical to their parental type and did not show any blending, that is all the offspring were either tall or dwarf, none were of in-between height (Figure 4.3).

Similar results were obtained with the other traits that he studied: only one of the parental traits was expressed in the F$_1$ generation while at the F$_2$ stage both the traits were expressed in the proportion 3:1. The contrasting traits did not show any blending at either F$_1$ or F$_2$ stage.

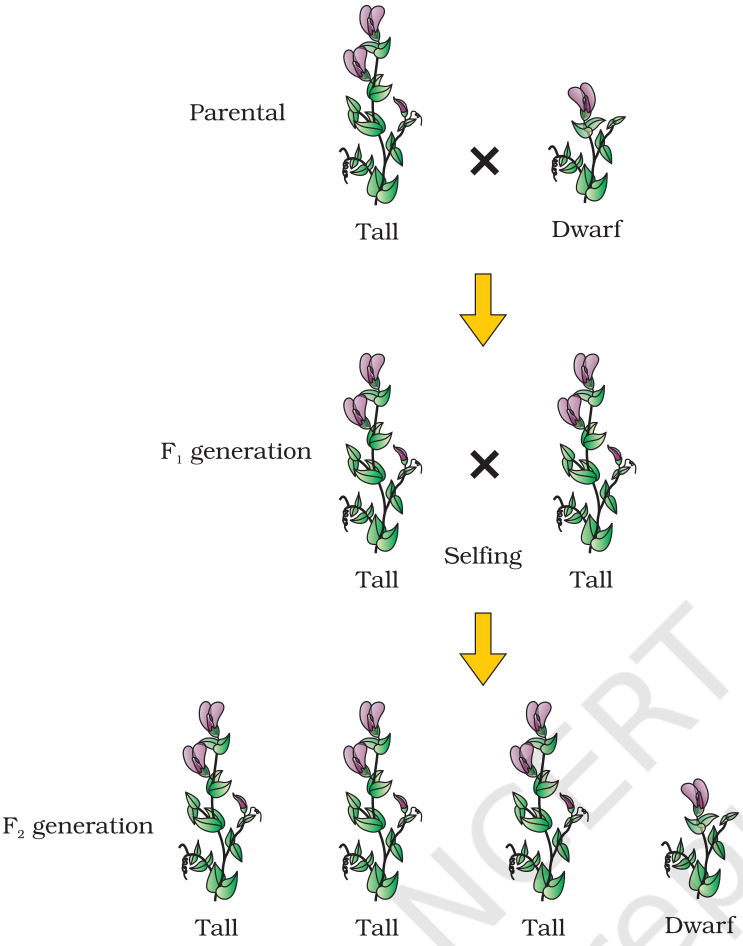


Figure 4.3 Diagrammatic representation of monohybrid cross

Based on these observations, Mendel proposed that something was being stably passed down, unchanged, from parent to offspring through the gametes, over successive generations. He called these things as 'factors'. Now we call them as **genes**. Genes, therefore, are the units of inheritance. They contain the information that is required to express a particular trait in an organism. Genes which code for a pair of contrasting traits are known as **alleles,** i.e., they are slightly different forms of the same gene.

If we use alphabetical symbols for each gene, then the capital letter is used for the trait expressed at the F_1 stage and the small alphabet for the other trait. For example, in case of the character of height, **T** is used for the Tall trait and **t** for the 'dwarf', and **T** and **t** are alleles of each other. Hence, in plants the pair of alleles for height would be **TT**, **Tt** or **tt**. Mendel also proposed that in a true breeding, tall or dwarf pea variety the allelic pair of genes for height are identical or **homozygous**, **TT** and **tt**, respectively. **TT** and **tt** are called the **genotype** of the plant while the descriptive terms **tall** and **dwarf** are the **phenotype**. What then would be the phenotype of a plant that had a genotype **Tt**?

As Mendel found the phenotype of the F_1 heterozygote **Tt** to be exactly like the **TT** parent in appearance, he proposed that in a pair of dissimilar factors, one dominates the other (as in the F_1) and hence is called the **dominant** factor while the other factor is **recessive** . In this case **T** (for tallness) is dominant over **t** (for dwarfness), that is recessive. He observed identical behaviour for all the other characters/trait-pairs that he studied.

It is convenient (and logical) to use the capital and lower case of an alphabetical symbol to remember this concept of dominance and recessiveness. (Do not use **T** for tall and **d** for dwarf because you will find it difficult to remember whether **T** and **d** are alleles of the same gene/character or not). Alleles can be similar as in the case of homozygotes **TT** and **tt** or can be dissimilar as in the case of the heterozygote **Tt**. Since the **Tt** plant is heterozygous for genes controlling one character (height), it is a **monohybrid** and the cross between **TT** and **tt** is a **monohybrid cross**.

From the observation that the recessive parental trait is expressed without any blending in the F_2 generation, we can infer that, when the tall and dwarf plant produce gametes, by the process of meiosis, the alleles of the parental pair separate or **segregate** from each other and only one allele is transmitted to a gamete. This segregation of alleles is a random process and so there is a 50 per cent chance of a gamete containing either allele, as has been verified by the results of the crossings. In this way the gametes of the tall **TT** plants have the allele **T** and the gametes of the dwarf **tt** plants have the allele **t**. During fertilisation the two alleles, **T** from one parent say, through the pollen, and **t** from the other parent, then through the egg, are united to produce zygotes that have one **T** allele and one **t** allele. In other words the hybrids have **Tt**. Since these hybrids contain alleles which express contrasting traits, the plants are **heterozygous**. The production of gametes by the parents, the formation of the zygotes, the F_1 and F_2 plants can be understood from a diagram called **Punnett Square** as shown in Figure 4.4. It was developed by a British geneticist, Reginald C. Punnett. It is a graphical representation to calculate the probability of all possible genotypes of offspring in a genetic cross. The possible gametes are written on two sides, usually the top row and left columns. All possible combinations are represented in boxes below in the squares, which generates a square output form.

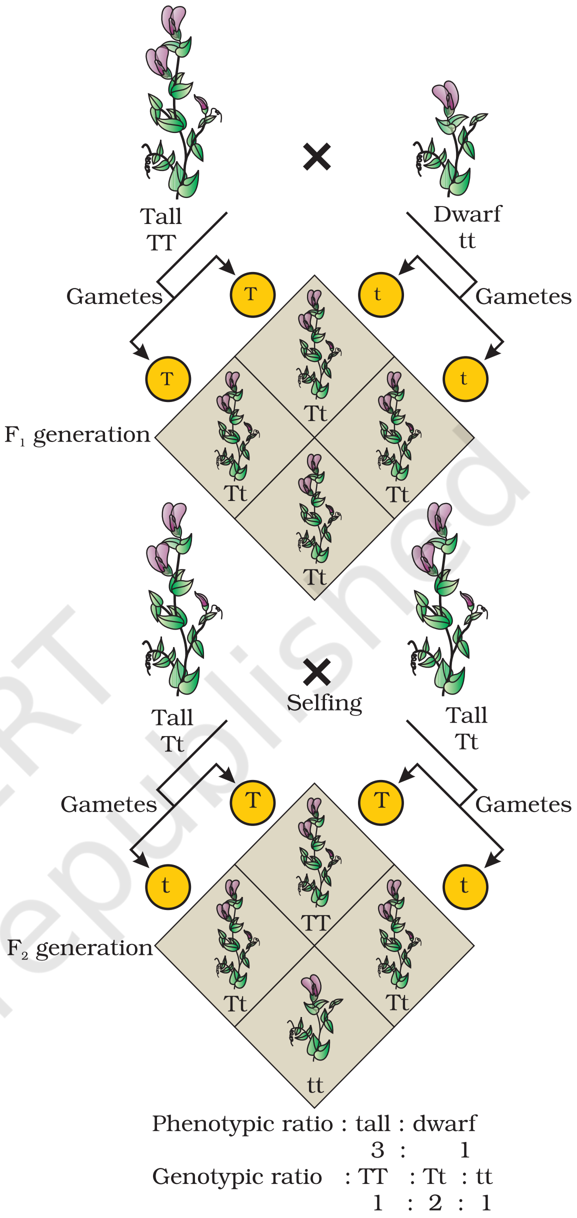


Figure 4.4 A Punnett square used to understand a typical monohybrid cross conducted by Mendel between true-breeding tall plants and true-breeding dwarf plants

The Punnett Square shows the parental tall **TT** (male) and dwarf **tt** (female) plants, the gametes produced by them and, the F_1 **Tt** progeny. The F_1 plants of genotype **Tt** are self-pollinated. The symbols ♀ and ♂ are used to denote the female (eggs) and male (pollen) of the F_1 generation, respectively. The F_1 plant of the genotype **Tt** when self-pollinated, produces gametes of the genotype **T** and **t** in equal proportion. When fertilisation takes place, the pollen grains of genotype **T** have a 50 per cent chance to pollinate eggs of the genotype **T**, as well as of genotype **t**. Also pollen grains of genotype **t** have a 50 per cent chance of pollinating eggs of genotype **T**, as well as of genotype **t**. As a result of random fertilisation, the resultant zygotes can be of the genotypes **TT**, **Tt** or **tt.**

From the Punnett square it is easily seen that 1/4th of the random fertilisations lead to **TT**, 1/2 lead to **Tt** and 1/4th to **tt**. Though the F_1 have a genotype of **Tt**, but the phenotypic character seen is 'tall'. At F_2, 3/4th of the plants are tall, where some of them are **TT** while others are **Tt**. Externally it is not possible to distinguish between the plants with the genotypes **TT** and **Tt**. Hence, within the genopytic pair **Tt** only one character '**T**' tall is expressed. Hence the character **T** or 'tall' is said to dominate over the other allele **t** or 'dwarf' character. It is thus due to this dominance of one character over the other that all the F_1 are tall (though the genotype is **Tt**) and in the F_2 3/4th of the plants are tall (though genotypically 1/2 are **Tt** and only 1/4th are **TT**). This leads to a phenotypic ratio of 3/4th tall : (1/4 **TT** + 1/2 **Tt**) and 1/4th **tt,** i.e., a 3:1 ratio, but a genotypic ratio of 1:2:1.

The 1/4 : 1/2 : 1/4 ratio of **TT**: **Tt**: **tt** is mathematically condensable to the form of the binomial expression $(ax + by)^2$, that has the gametes bearing genes **T** or **t** in equal frequency of ½. The expression is expanded as given below :

$$(1/2\mathbf{T} + 1/2\ \mathbf{t})^2 = (1/2\mathbf{T} + 1/2\mathbf{t}) \text{ X } (1/2\mathbf{T} + 1/2\mathbf{t}) = 1/4\ \mathbf{TT} + 1/2\mathbf{Tt} + 1/4\ \mathbf{tt}$$

Mendel self-pollinated the F_2 plants and found that dwarf F_2 plants continued to generate dwarf plants in F_3 and F_4 generations. He concluded that the genotype of the dwarfs was homozygous – **tt**. What do you think he would have got had he self-pollinated a tall F_2 plant?

From the preceeding paragraphs it is clear that though the genotypic ratios can be calculated using mathematical probability, by simply looking at the phenotype of a dominant trait, it is not possible to know the genotypic composition. That is, for example, whether a tall plant from F_1 or F_2 has **TT** or **Tt** composition, cannot be predicted. Therefore, to determine the genotype of a tall plant at F_2, Mendel crossed the tall plant from F_2 with a dwarf plant. This he called a **test cross**. In a typical test cross an organism (pea plants here) showing a dominant phenotype (and whose genotype is to be determined) is crossed with the recessive parent instead of self-crossing. The progenies of such a cross can easily be analysed to predict the genotype of the test organism. Figure 4.5 shows the results of typical test cross where violet colour flower (V) is dominant over white colour flower (v).

Using Punnett square, try to find out the nature of offspring of a test cross.

What ratio did you get?

Using the genotypes of this cross, can you give a general definition for a test cross?

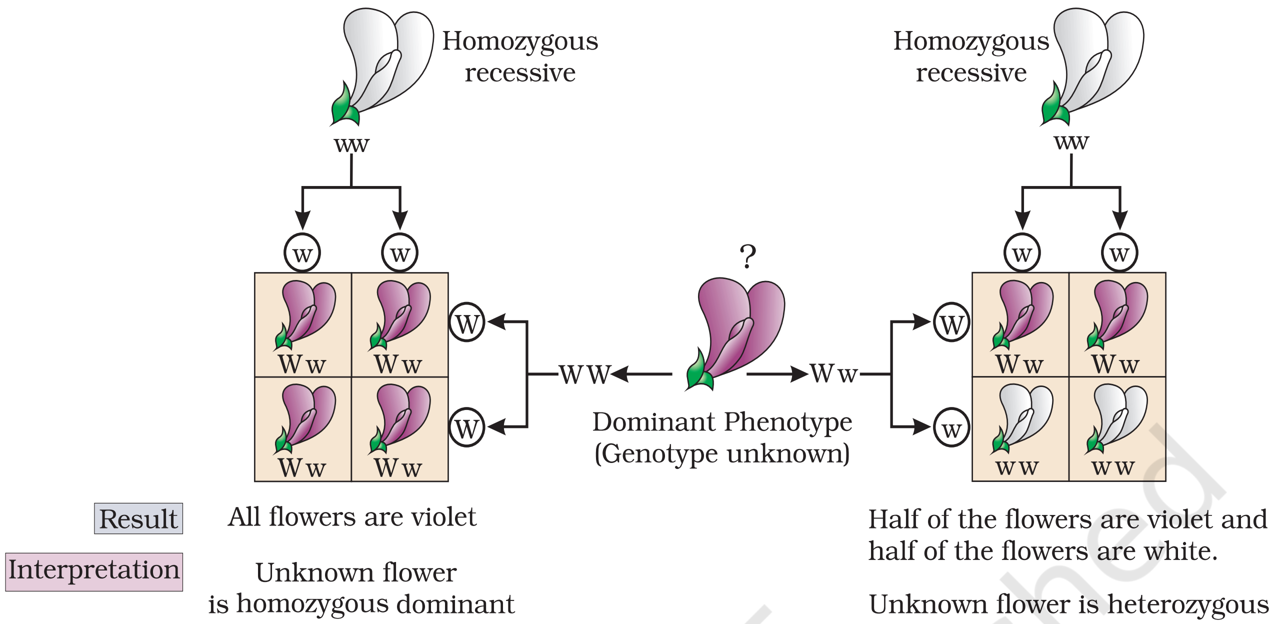

Homozygous recessive
ww
w
w
Ww
Ww
Ww
Ww
W
W
WW
?
Dominant Phenotype (Genotype unknown)
Ww
Homozygous recessive
ww
w
w
W
w
Ww
Ww
ww
ww
Result
All flowers are violet
Half of the flowers are violet and half of the flowers are white.
Interpretation
Unknown flower is homozygous dominant
Unknown flower is heterozygous

Figure 4.5 Diagrammatic representation of a test cross

Based on his observations on monohybrid crosses Mendel proposed two general rules to consolidate his understanding of inheritance in monohybrid crosses. Today these rules are called the **Principles or Laws of Inheritance:** the First Law or **Law of Dominance** and the Second Law or **Law of Segregation**.

4.2.1 Law of Dominance

(i) Characters are controlled by discrete units called **factors**.
(ii) Factors occur in pairs.
(iii) In a dissimilar pair of factors one member of the pair dominates (dominant) the other (recessive).

The law of dominance is used to explain the expression of only one of the parental characters in a monohybrid cross in the F_1 and the expression of both in the F_2. It also explains the proportion of 3:1 obtained at the F_2.

4.2.2 Law of Segregation

This law is based on the fact that the alleles do not show any blending and that both the characters are recovered as such in the F_2 generation though one of these is not seen at the F_1 stage. Though the parents contain two alleles during gamete formation, the factors or alleles of a pair segregate from each other such that a gamete receives only one of the two factors. Of course, a homozygous parent produces all gametes that are similar while a heterozygous one produces two kinds of gametes each having one allele with equal proportion.

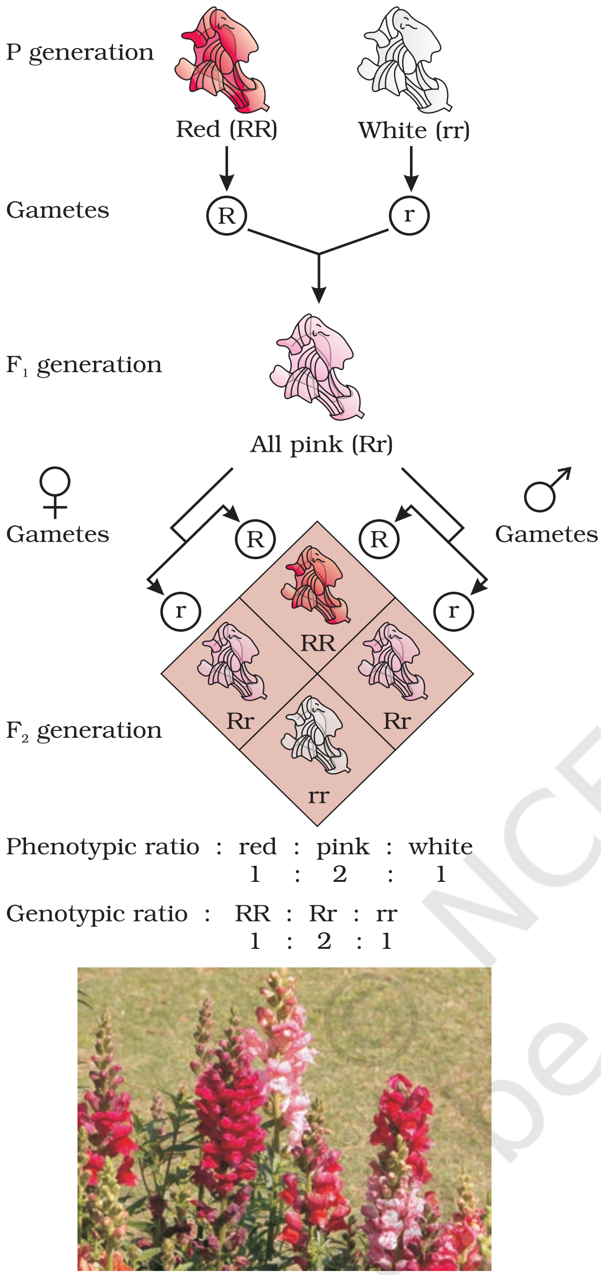


Figure 4.6 Results of monohybrid cross in the plant Snapdragon, where one allele is incompletely dominant over the other allele

4.2.2.1 *Incomplete Dominance*

When experiments on peas were repeated using other traits in other plants, it was found that sometimes the F_1 had a phenotype that did not resemble either of the two parents and was in between the two. The inheritance of flower colour in the dog flower (snapdragon or *Antirrhinum sp.*) is a good example to understand incomplete dominance. In a cross between true-breeding red-flowered **(RR)** and true-breeding white-flowered plants **(rr)**, the F_1 **(Rr)** was pink (Figure 4.6). When the F_1 was self-pollinated the F_2 resulted in the following ratio 1 **(RR)** Red : 2 **(Rr)** Pink : 1 **(rr)** White. Here the genotype ratios were exactly as we would expect in any mendelian monohybrid cross, but the phenotype ratios had changed from the 3:1 dominant : recessive ratio. What happened was that **R** was not completely dominant over **r** and this made it possible to distinguish **Rr** as pink from **RR** (red) and **rr** (white) .

Explanation of the concept of dominance: What exactly is dominance? Why are some alleles dominant and some recessive? To tackle these questions, we must understand what a gene does. Every gene, as you know by now, contains the information to express a particular trait. In a diploid organism, there are two copies of each gene, i.e., as a pair of alleles. Now, these two alleles need not always be identical, as in a heterozygote. One of them may be different due to some changes that it has undergone (about which you will read further on, and in the next chapter) which modifies the information that particular allele contains.

Let's take an example of a gene that contains the information for producing an enzyme. Now there are two copies of this gene, the two allelic forms. Let us assume (as is more common) that the normal allele produces the normal enzyme that is needed for the transformation of a substrate S. Theoretically, the modified allele could be responsible for production of –

(i) the normal/less efficient enzyme, or
(ii) a non-functional enzyme, or
(iii) no enzyme at all

In the first case, the modified allele is equivalent to the unmodified allele, i.e., it will produce the same phenotype/trait, i.e., result in the transformation of substrate S. Such equivalent allele pairs are very common. But, if the allele produces a non-functional enzyme or no enzyme, the phenotype may be effected. The phenotype/trait will only be dependent on the functioning of the unmodified allele. The unmodified (functioning) allele, which represents the original phenotype is the dominant allele and the modified allele is generally the recessive allele. Hence, in the example above the recessive trait is seen due to non-functional enzyme or because no enzyme is produced.

4.2.2.2 Co-dominance

Till now we were discussing crosses where the F_1 resembled either of the two parents (dominance) or was in-between (incomplete dominance). But, in the case of co-dominance the F_1 generation resembles both parents. A good example is different types of red blood cells that determine ABO blood grouping in human beings. ABO blood groups are controlled by the gene ***I***. The plasma membrane of the red blood cells has sugar polymers that protrude from its surface and the kind of sugar is controlled by the gene. The gene (***I***) has three alleles $\boldsymbol{I^A}$, $\boldsymbol{I^B}$ and ***i***. The alleles $\boldsymbol{I^A}$ and $\boldsymbol{I^B}$ produce a slightly different form of the sugar while allele ***i*** does not produce any sugar. Because humans are diploid organisms, each person possesses any two of the three ***I*** gene alleles. $\boldsymbol{I^A}$ and $\boldsymbol{I^B}$ are completely dominant over ***i***, in other words when $\boldsymbol{I^A}$ and ***i*** are present only $\boldsymbol{I^A}$ expresses (because ***i*** does not produce any sugar), and when $\boldsymbol{I^B}$ and ***i*** are present $\boldsymbol{I^B}$ expresses. But when $\boldsymbol{I^A}$ and $\boldsymbol{I^B}$ are present together they both express their own types of sugars: this is because of co-dominance. Hence red blood cells have both A and B types of sugars. Since there are three different alleles, there are six different combinations of these three alleles that are possible, and therefore, a total of six different genotypes of the human ABO blood types (Table 4.2). *How many phenotypes are possible?*

Table 4.2: Table Showing the Genetic Basis of Blood Groups in Human Population

Allele from Parent 1	**Allele from Parent 2**	**Genotype of offspring**	**Blood types of offspring**
I^A	I^A	$I^A I^A$	A
I^A	I^B	$I^A I^B$	AB
I^A	i	$I^A i$	A
I^B	I^A	$I^A I^B$	AB
I^B	I^B	$I^B I^B$	B
I^B	i	$I^B i$	B
i	i	$i\,i$	O

Do you realise that the example of ABO blood grouping also provides a good example of **multiple alleles**? Here you can see that there are more than two, i.e., three alleles, governing the same character. Since in an individual only two alleles can be present, multiple alleles can be found only when population studies are made.

Occasionally, a single gene product may produce more than one effect. For example, starch synthesis in pea seeds is controlled by one gene. It has two alleles (**B** and **b**). Starch is synthesised effectively by **BB** homozygotes and therefore, large starch grains are produced. In contrast, **bb** homozygotes have lesser efficiency in starch synthesis and produce smaller starch grains. After maturation of the seeds, **BB** seeds are round and the **bb** seeds are wrinkled. Heterozygotes produce round seeds, and so **B** seems to be the dominant allele. But, the starch grains produced are of intermediate size in **Bb** seeds. So if starch grain size is considered as the phenotype, then from this angle, the alleles show incomplete dominance.

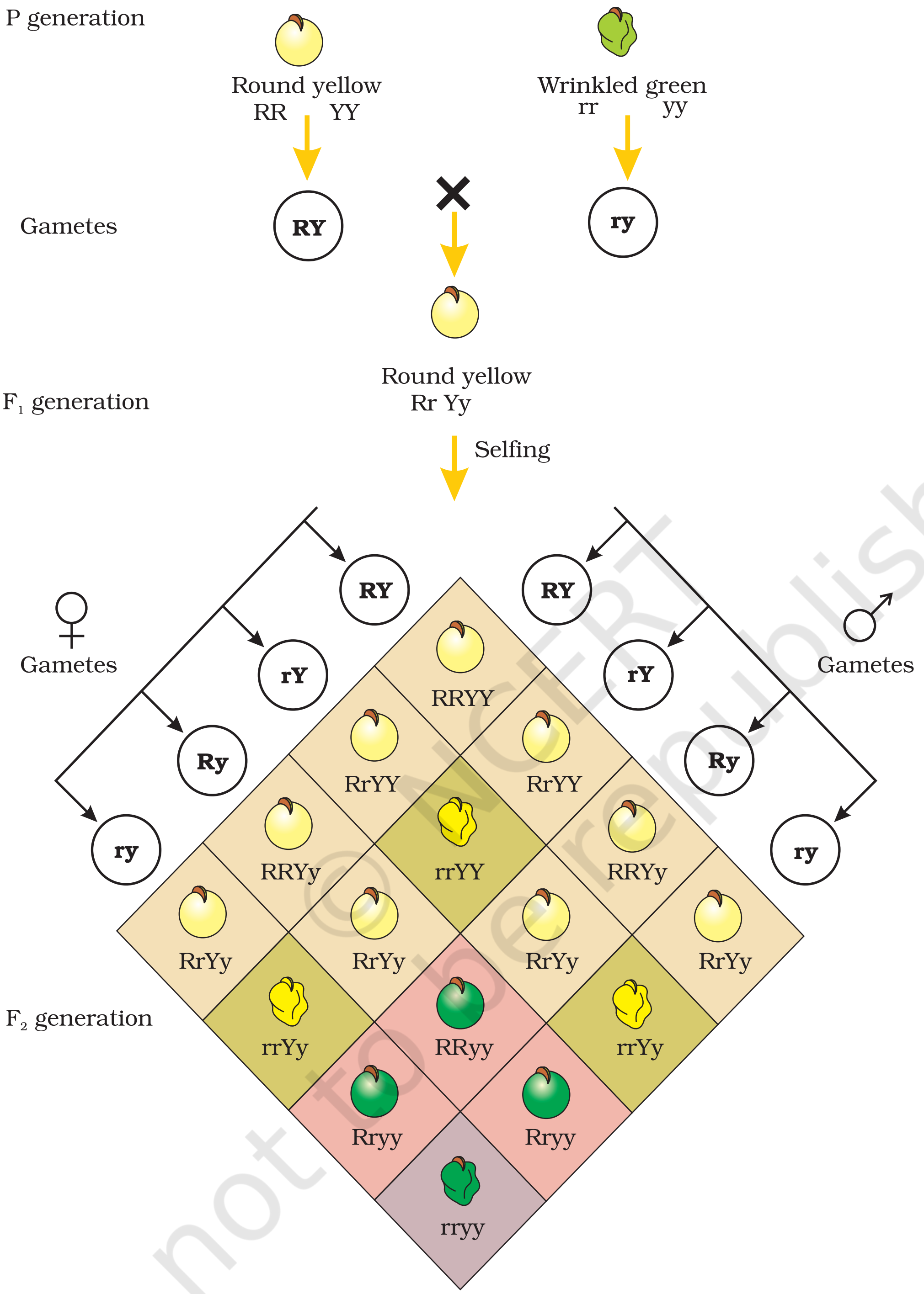
Therefore, dominance is not an autonomous feature of a gene or the product that it has information for. It depends as much on the gene product and the production of a particular phenotype from this product as it does on the particular phenotype that we choose to examine, in case more than one phenotype is influenced by the same gene.

4.3 INHERITANCE OF TWO GENES

Mendel also worked with and crossed pea plants that differed in two characters, as is seen in the cross between a pea plant that has seeds with yellow colour and round shape and one that had seeds of green colour and wrinkled shape (Figure 4.7). Mendel found that the seeds resulting from the crossing of the parents, had yellow coloured and round shaped seeds. *Here can you tell which of the characters in the pairs yellow/green colour and round/wrinkled shape was dominant?*

Thus, yellow colour was dominant over green and round shape dominant over wrinkled. These results were identical to those that he got when he made separate monohybrid crosses between yellow and green seeded plants and between round and wrinkled seeded plants.

Let us use the genotypic symbols **Y** for dominant yellow seed colour and **y** for recessive green seed colour, **R** for round shaped seeds and **r** for wrinkled seed shape. The genotype of the parents can then be written as **RRYY** and **rryy**. The cross between the two plants can be written down as in Figure 4.7 showing the genotypes of the parent plants. The gametes **RY** and **ry** unite on fertilisation to produce the F_1 hybrid **RrYy**. When Mendel self hybridised the F_1 plants he found that 3/4th of F_2 plants had yellow seeds and 1/4th had green. The yellow and green colour segregated in a 3:1 ratio. Round and wrinkled seed shape also segregated in a 3:1 ratio; just like in a monohybrid cross.


P generation
Round yellow
RR YY
Wrinkled green
rr yy
Gametes
RY
ry
F_1 generation
Round yellow
Rr Yy
Selfing
♀
Gametes
RY
rY
Ry
ry
♂
Gametes
RY
rY
Ry
ry
F_2 generation
RRYY
RrYY
RrYY
RRYy
rrYY
RRYy
RrYy
RrYy
RrYy
RrYy
rrYy
RRyy
rrYy
Rryy
Rryy
rryy

Phenotypic ratio : round yellow : round green : wrinkled yellow : wrinkled green
9 3 3 1

Figure 4.7 Results of a dihybrid cross where the two parents differed in two pairs of contrasting traits: seed colour and seed shape

4.3.1 Law of Independent Assortment

In the dihybrid cross (Figure 4.7), the phenotypes round, yellow; wrinkled, yellow; round, green and wrinkled, green appeared in the ratio 9:3:3:1. Such a ratio was observed for several pairs of characters that Mendel studied.

The ratio of 9:3:3:1 can be derived as a combination series of 3 yellow: 1 green, with 3 round : 1 wrinkled. This derivation can be written as follows:

(3 Round : 1 Wrinkled) (3 Yellow : 1 Green) = 9 Round, Yellow : 3 Wrinkled, Yellow: 3 Round, Green : 1 Wrinkled, Green

Based upon such observations on **dihybrid crosses** (crosses between plants differing in two traits) Mendel proposed a second set of generalisations that we call Mendel's Law of Independent Assortment. The law states that 'when two pairs of traits are combined in a hybrid, segregation of one pair of characters is independent of the other pair of characters'.

The Punnett square can be effectively used to understand the independent segregation of the two pairs of genes during meiosis and the production of eggs and pollen in the F_1 **RrYy** plant. Consider the segregation of one pair of genes **R** and **r**. Fifty per cent of the gametes have the gene **R** and the other 50 per cent have **r**. Now besides each gamete having either **R** or **r**, it should also have the allele **Y** or **y**. The important thing to remember here is that segregation of 50 per cent **R** and 50 per cent ***r*** is *independent* from the segregation of 50 per cent **Y** and 50 per cent **y**. Therefore, 50 per cent of the **r** bearing gametes has **Y** and the other 50 per cent has **y**. Similarly, 50 per cent of the **R** bearing gametes has **Y** and the other 50 per cent has **y**. Thus there are four genotypes of gametes (four types of pollen and four types of eggs). The four types are **RY**, **Ry**, **r*Y*** and **ry** each with a frequency of 25 per cent or 1/4th of the total gametes produced. When you write down the four types of eggs and pollen on the two sides of a Punnett square it is very easy to derive the composition of the zygotes that give rise to the F_2 plants (Figure 4.7). *Although there are 16 squares how many different types of genotypes and phenotypes are formed?* Note them down in the format given.

Can you, using the Punnett square data work out the genotypic ratio at the F_2 stage and fill in the format given? Is the genotypic ratio also 9:3:3:1?

S.No.	**Genotypes found in F_2**	**Their expected Phenotypes**

4.3.2 Chromosomal Theory of Inheritance

Mendel published his work on inheritance of characters in 1865 but for several reasons, it remained unrecognised till 1900. Firstly, communication was not easy (as it is now) in those days and his work could not be widely publicised. Secondly, his concept of **genes** (or **factors**, in Mendel's words) as stable and discrete units that controlled the expression of traits and, of the pair of alleles which did not 'blend' with each other, was not accepted by his contemporaries as an explanation for the apparently continuous variation seen in nature. Thirdly, Mendel's approach of using mathematics to explain biological phenomena was totally new and unacceptable to many of the biologists of his time. Finally, though Mendel's work suggested that factors (genes) were discrete units, he could not provide any physical proof for the existence of factors or say what they were made of.

In 1900, three Scientists (de Vries, Correns and von Tschermak) independently rediscovered Mendel's results on the inheritance of characters. Also, by this time due to advancements in microscopy that were taking place, scientists were able to carefully observe cell division. This led to the discovery of structures in the nucleus that appeared to double and divide just before each cell division. These were called **chromosomes** (*colored bodies*, as they were visualised by staining). By 1902, the chromosome movement during meiosis had been worked out. Walter Sutton and Theodore Boveri noted that the behaviour of chromosomes was parallel to the behaviour of genes and used chromosome movement (Figure 4.8) to explain Mendel's laws (Table 4.3). Recall that you have studied the behaviour of chromosomes during mitosis (equational division) and during meiosis (reduction division). The important things to remember are that chromosomes as well as genes occur in pairs. The two alleles of a gene pair are located on homologous sites on homologous chromosomes.

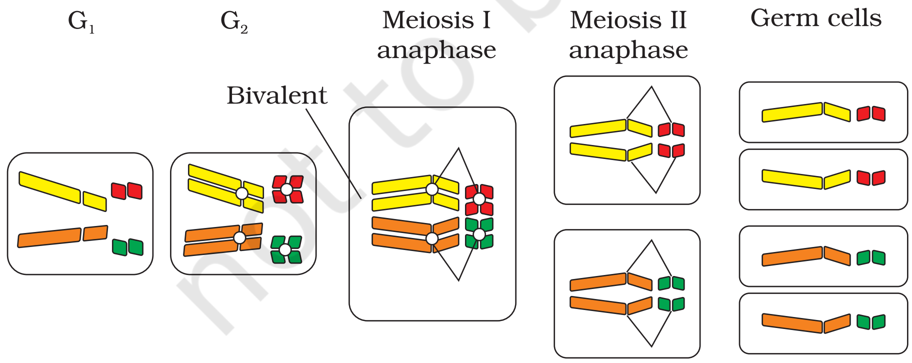


Figure 4.8 Meiosis and germ cell formation in a cell with four chromosomes. Can you see how chromosomes segregate when germ cells are formed?

Table 4.3: A Comparison between the Behaviour of Chromosomes and Genes

A	B
Occur in pairs	*Occur in pairs*
Segregate at the time of gamete formation such that only one of each pair is transmitted to a gamete	*Segregate at gamete formation and only one of each pair is transmitted to a gamete*
Independent pairs segregate independently of each other	*One pair segregates independently of another pair*
Can you tell which of these columns A or B represent the chromosome and which represents the gene? How did you decide?	

During Anaphase of meiosis I, the two chromosome pairs can align at the metaphase plate independently of each other (Figure 4.9). To understand this, compare the chromosomes of four different colour in the left and right columns. In the left column (Possibility I) orange and green is segregating together. But in the right hand column (Possibility II) the orange chromosome is segregating with the red chromosomes.

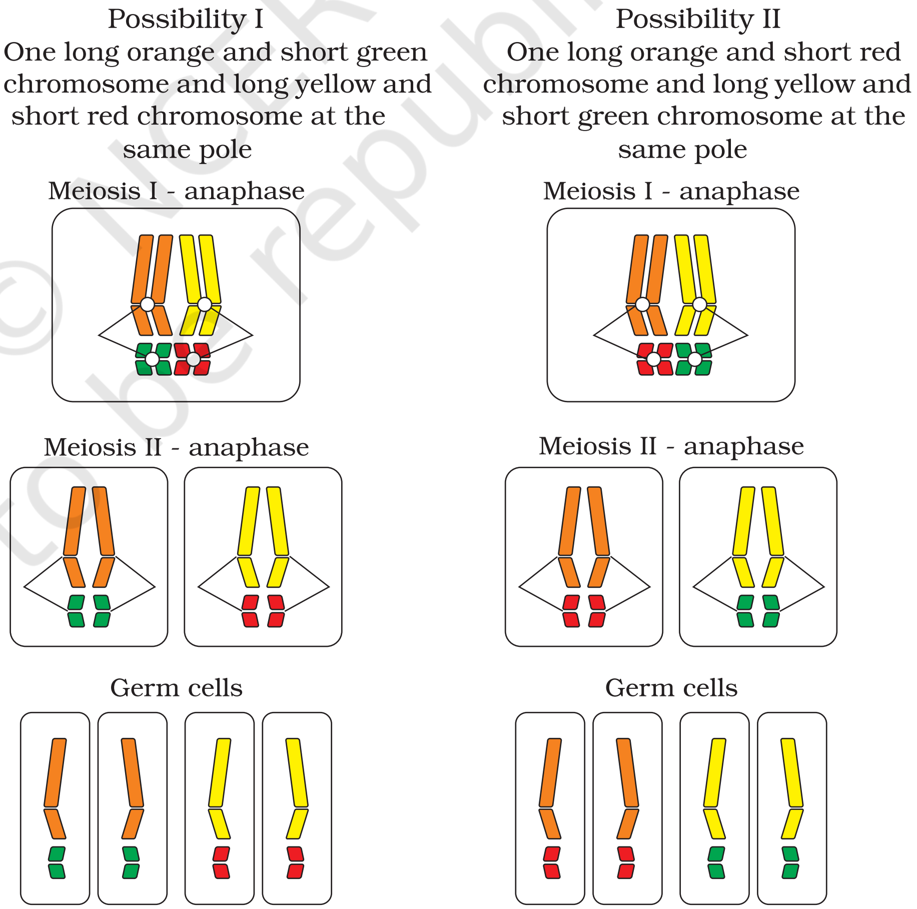

Possibility I
One long orange and short green chromosome and long yellow and short red chromosome at the same pole
Possibility II
One long orange and short red chromosome and long yellow and short green chromosome at the same pole
Meiosis I - anaphase
Meiosis I - anaphase
Meiosis II - anaphase
Meiosis II - anaphase
Germ cells
Germ cells

Figure 4.9 Independent assortment of chromosomes

Sutton and Boveri argued that the pairing and separation of a pair of chromosomes would lead to the segregation of a pair of factors they carried. Sutton united the knowledge of chromosomal segregation with Mendelian principles and called it the **chromosomal theory of inheritance**.

Following this synthesis of ideas, experimental verification of the chromosomal theory of inheritance by Thomas Hunt Morgan and his colleagues, led to discovering the basis for the variation that sexual reproduction produced. Morgan worked with the tiny fruit flies, ***Drosophila melanogaster*** (Figure 4.10), which were found very suitable for such studies. They could be grown on simple synthetic medium in the laboratory. They complete their life cycle in about two weeks, and a single mating could produce a large number of progeny flies. Also, there was a clear differentiation of the sexes – the male and female flies are easily distinguishable. Also, it has many types of hereditary variations that can be seen with low power microscopes.

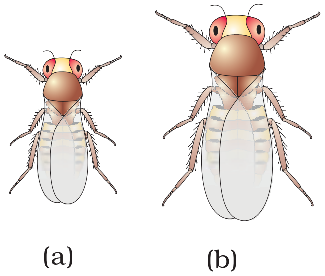


Figure 4.10 *Drosophila melanogaster* (a) Male (b) Female

4.3.3 Linkage and Recombination

Morgan carried out several dihybrid crosses in *Drosophila* to study genes that were sex-linked. The crosses were similar to the dihybrid crosses carried out by Mendel in peas. For example Morgan hybridised yellow-bodied, white-eyed females to brown-bodied, red-eyed males and intercrossed their F_1 progeny. He observed that the two genes did not segregate independently of each other and the F_2 ratio deviated very significantly from the 9:3:3:1 ratio (expected when the two genes are independent).

Morgan and his group knew that the genes were located on the X chromosome (Section 4.4) and saw quickly that when the two genes in a dihybrid cross were situated on the same chromosome, the proportion of parental gene combinations were much higher than the non-parental type. Morgan attributed this due to the physical association or linkage of the two genes and coined the term **linkage** to describe this physical association of genes on a chromosome and the term **recombination** to describe the generation of non-parental gene combinations (Figure 4.11). Morgan and his group also found that even when genes were grouped on the same chromosome, some genes were very tightly linked (showed very low recombination) (Figure 4.11, Cross A) while others were loosely linked (showed higher recombination) (Figure 4.11, Cross B). For example he found that the genes white and yellow were very tightly linked and showed only 1.3 per cent recombination while white and miniature wing showed 37.2 per cent recombination. His student Alfred Sturtevant used the frequency of recombination between gene pairs on the same chromosome as a measure of the distance between genes and 'mapped' their position on the chromosome. Today genetic maps are extensively used as a starting point in the sequencing of whole genomes as was done in the case of the Human Genome Sequencing Project, described later.

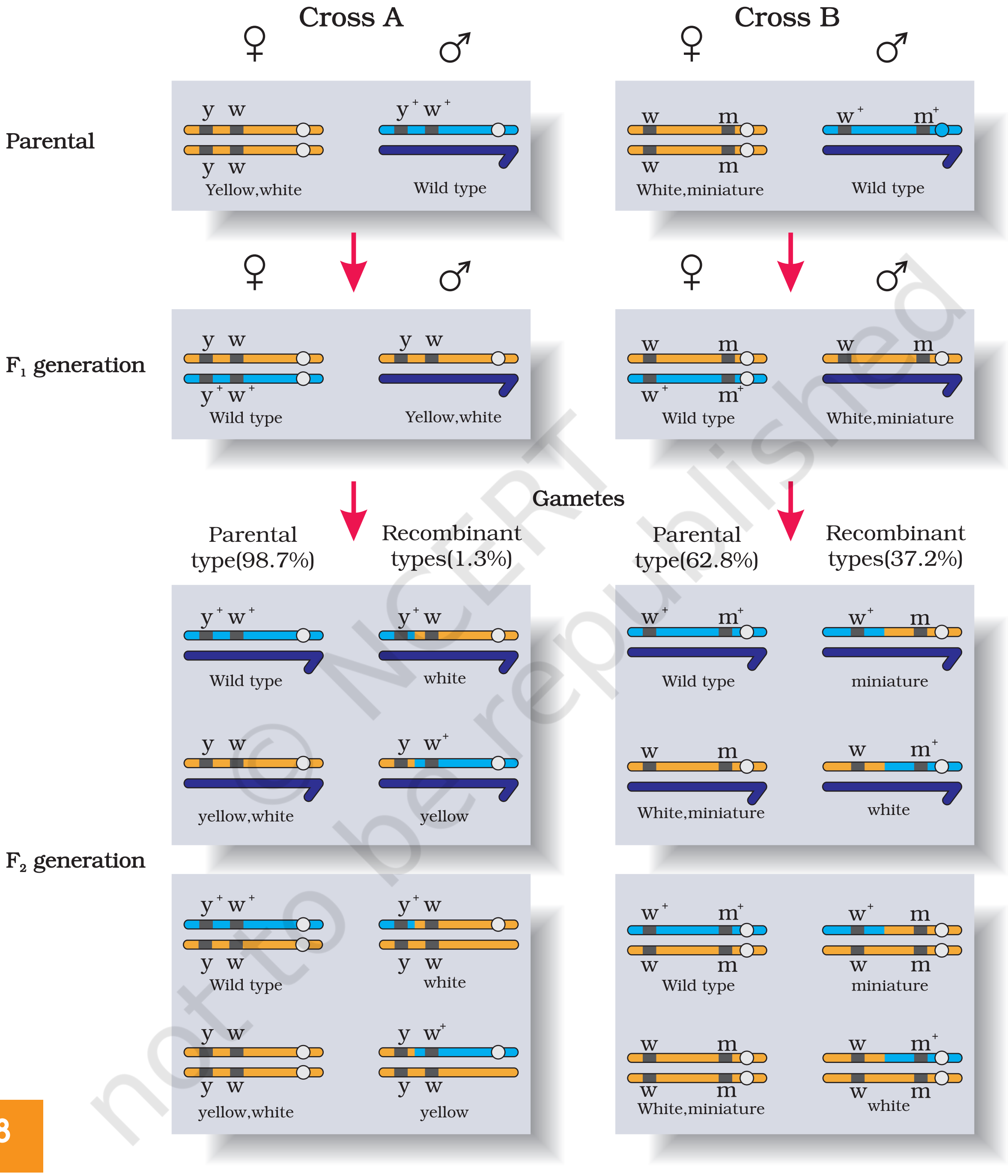

Cross A
♀
♂
Cross B
♀
♂
Parental
y w
y w
Yellow,white
y^+ w^+
Wild type
w m
w m
White,miniature
w^+ m^+
Wild type
F₁ generation
y w
y^+ w^+
Wild type
y w
Yellow,white
w m
w^+ m^+
Wild type
w m
White,miniature
Gametes
Parental type(98.7%)
Recombinant types(1.3%)
Parental type(62.8%)
Recombinant types(37.2%)
F₂ generation
y^+ w^+
Wild type
y^+ w
white
y w
yellow,white
y w^+
yellow
w^+ m^+
Wild type
w^+ m
miniature
w m
White,miniature
w m^+
white
y^+ w^+
y w
Wild type
y^+ w
y w
white
y w
y w
yellow,white
y w^+
y w
yellow
w^+ m^+
w m
Wild type
w^+ m
w m
miniature
w m
w m
White,miniature
w m^+
w m
white

Figure 4.11 Linkage: Results of two dihybrid crosses conducted by Morgan. Cross A shows crossing between gene y and w; Cross B shows crossing between genes w and m. Here dominant wild type alleles are represented with (+) sign in superscript
Note: The strength of linkage between y and w is higher than w and m.

4.4 POLYGENIC INHERITANCE

Mendel's studies mainly described those traits that have distinct alternate forms such as flower colour which are either purple or white. But if you look around you will find that there are many traits which are not so distinct in their occurrence and are spread across a gradient. For example, in humans we don't just have tall or short people as two distinct alternatives but a whole range of possible heights. Such traits are generally controlled by three or more genes and are thus called as polygenic traits. Besides the involvement of multiple genes polygenic inheritance also takes into account the influence of environment. Human skin colour is another classic example for this. In a polygenic trait the phenotype reflects the contribution of each allele, i.e., the effect of each allele is additive. To understand this better let us assume that three genes A, B, C control skin colour in human with the dominant forms A, B and C responsible for dark skin colour and the recessive forms a, b and c for light skin colour. The genotype with all the dominant alleles (AABBCC) will have the darkest skin colour and that with all the recessive alleles (aabbcc) will have the lightest skin colour. As expected the genotype with three dominant alleles and three recessive alleles will have an intermediate skin colour. In this manner the number of each type of alleles in the genotype would determine the darkness or lightness of the skin in an individual.

4.5 PLEIOTROPY

We have so far seen the effect of a gene on a single phenotype or trait. There are however instances where a single gene can exhibit multiple phenotypic expression. Such a gene is called a pleiotropic gene. The underlying mechanism of pleiotropy in most cases is the effect of a gene on metabolic pathways which contribute towards different phenotypes. An example of this is the disease phenylketonuria, which occurs in humans. The disease is caused by mutation in the gene that codes for the enzyme phenyl alanine hydroxylase (single gene mutation). This manifests itself through phenotypic expression characterised by mental retardation and a reduction in hair and skin pigmentation.

4.6 SEX DETERMINATION

The mechanism of sex determination has always been a puzzle before the geneticists. The initial clue about the genetic/chromosomal mechanism of sex determination can be traced back to some of the experiments carried out in insects. In fact, the cytological observations made in a number of insects led to the development of the concept of genetic/chromosomal basis of sex-determination. Henking (1891) could trace a specific nuclear structure all through spermatogenesis in a few insects, and it was also observed by him that 50 per cent of the sperm received this structure after spermatogenesis, whereas the other 50 per cent sperm did not receive it. Henking gave a name to this structure as the **X body** but he could not explain its significance. Further investigations by other scientists led to the conclusion that the 'X body' of Henking was in fact a chromosome

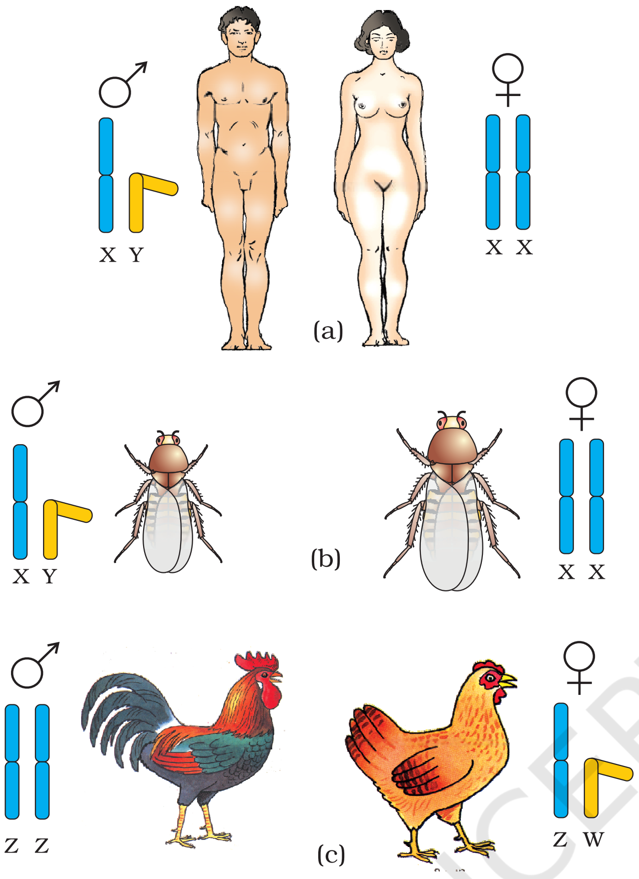


Figure 4.12 Determination of sex by chromosomal differences: (a,b) Both in humans and in *Drosophila*, the female has a pair of XX chromosomes (homogametic) and the male XY (heterogametic) composition; (c) In many birds, female has a pair of dissimilar chromosomes ZW and male two similar ZZ chromosomes

and that is why it was given the name X-chromosome. It was also observed that in a large number of insects the mechanism of sex determination is of the XO type, i.e., all eggs bear an additional X-chromosome besides the other chromosomes (autosomes). On the other hand, some of the sperms bear the X-chromosome whereas some do not. Eggs fertilised by sperm having an X-chromosome become females and, those fertilised by sperms that do not have an X-chromosome become males. *Do you think the number of chromosomes in the male and female are equal?* Due to the involvement of the X-chromosome in the determination of sex, it was designated to be the **sex chromosome**, and the rest of the chromosomes were named as **autosomes**.Grasshopper is an example of XO type of sex determination in which the males have only one X-chromosome besides the autosomes, whereas females have a pair of X-chromosomes.

These observations led to the investigation of a number of species to understand the mechanism of sex determination. In a number of other insects and mammals including man, XY type of sex determination is seen where both male and female have same number of chromosomes. Among the males an X-chromosome is present but its counter part is distinctly smaller and called the Y-chromosome. Females, however, have a pair of X-chromosomes. Both males and females bear same number of autosomes. Hence, the males have autosomes plus XY, while female have autosomes plus XX. In human beings and in *Drosophila* the males have one X and one Y chromosome, whereas females have a pair of X-chromosomes besides autosomes (Figure 4.12 a, b).

In the above description you have studied about two types of sex determining mechanisms, i.e., XO type and XY type. But in both cases males produce two different types of gametes, (a) either with or without X-chromosome or (b) some gametes with X-chromosome and some with Y-chromosome. Such types of sex determination mechanism is designated to be the example of **male heterogamety**. In some other organisms, e.g., birds, a different mechanism of sex determination is observed (Figure 4.12 c). In this case the total number of chromosome is same in both males and females. But two different types of gametes in terms of the sex chromosomes, are produced by females, i.e., **female heterogamety**. In order to have a distinction with the mechanism of sex determination described earlier, the two different sex chromosomes of a female bird has been designated to be the Z and W chromosomes. In these organisms the females have one Z and one W chromosome, whereas males have a pair of Z-chromosomes besides the autosomes.

4.6.1 Sex Determination in Humans

It has already been mentioned that the sex determining mechanism in case of humans is XY type. Out of 23 pairs of chromosomes present, 22 pairs are exactly same in both males and females; these are the autosomes. A pair of X-chromosomes are present in the female, whereas the presence of an X and Y chromosome are determinant of the male characteristic. During spermatogenesis among males, two types of gametes are produced. 50 per cent of the total sperm produced carry the X-chromosome and the rest 50 per cent has Y-chromosome besides the autosomes. Females, however, produce only one type of ovum with an X-chromosome. There is an equal probability of fertilisation of the ovum with the sperm carrying either X or Y chromosome. In case the ovum fertilises with a sperm carrying X-chromosome the zygote develops into a female (XX) and the fertilisation of ovum with Y-chromosome carrying sperm results into a male offspring. Thus, it is evident that it is the genetic makeup of the sperm that determines the sex of the child. It is also evident that in each pregnancy there is always 50 per cent probability of either a male or a female child. It is unfortunate that in our society women are blamed for giving birth to female children and have been ostracised and ill-treated because of this false notion.

4.6.2 Sex Determination in Honey Bee

The sex determination in honey bee is based on the number of sets of chromosomes an individual receives. An offspring formed from the union of a sperm and an egg develops as a female (queen or worker), and an unfertilised egg develops as a male (drone) by means of parthenogenesis. This means that the males have half the number of chromosomes than that of a female. The females are diploid having 32 chromosomes and males are haploid, i.e., having 16 chromosomes. This is called as haplodiploid sex-determination system and has special characteristic features such as the males produce sperms by mitosis (Figure 4.13), they do not have father and thus cannot have sons, but have a grandfather and can have grandsons.

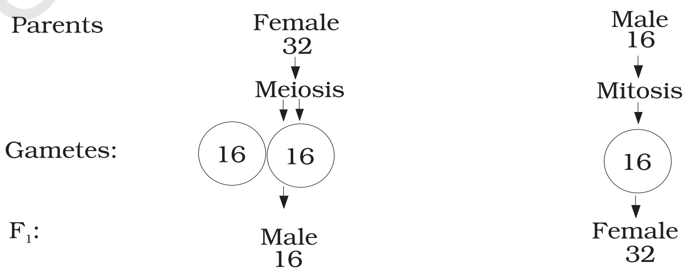


Figure 4.13 Sex determination in honey bee

How is the sex-determination mechanism different in the birds? *Is the sperm or the egg responsible for the sex of the chicks?*

4.7 MUTATION

Mutation is a phenomenon which results in alteration of DNA sequences and consequently results in changes in the genotype and the phenotype of an organism. In addition to recombination, mutation is another phenomenon that leads to variation in DNA.

As you will learn in Chapter 5, one DNA helix runs continuously from one end to the other in each chromatid, in a highly supercoiled form. Therefore loss (deletions) or gain (insertion/duplication) of a segment of DNA, result in alteration in chromosomes. Since genes are known to be located on chromosomes, alteration in chromosomes results in abnormalities or aberrations. Chromosomal aberrations are commonly observed in cancer cells.

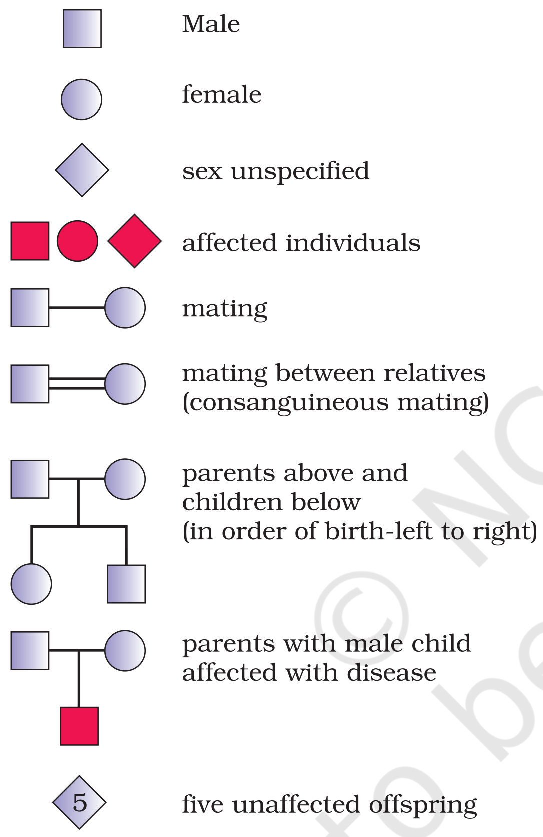

Male
female
sex unspecified
affected individuals
mating
mating between relatives (consanguineous mating)
parents above and children below (in order of birth-left to right)
parents with male child affected with disease
5
five unaffected offspring

Figure 4.13 Symbols used in the human pedigree analysis

In addition to the above, mutation also arise due to change in a single base pair of DNA. This is known as point mutation. A classical example of such a mutation is sickle cell anemia. Deletions and insertions of base pairs of DNA, causes frame-shift mutations (see Chapter 5).

The mechanism of mutation is beyond the scope of this discussion, at this level. However, there are many chemical and physical factors that induce mutations. These are referred to as mutagens. UV radiations can cause mutations in organisms – it is a mutagen.

4.8 GENETIC DISORDERS

4.8.1 Pedigree Analysis

The idea that disorders are inherited has been prevailing in the human society since long. This was based on the heritability of certain characteristic features in families. After the rediscovery of Mendel's work the practice of analysing inheritance pattern of traits in human beings began. Since it is evident that control crosses that can be performed in pea plant or some other organisms, are not possible in case of human beings, study of the family history about inheritance of a particular trait provides an alternative. Such an analysis of traits in a several of generations of a family is called the **pedigree analysis**. In the pedigree analysis the inheritance of a particular trait is represented in the family tree over generations.

In human genetics, pedigree study provides a strong tool, which is utilised to trace the inheritance of a specific trait, abnormality or disease. Some of the important standard symbols used in the pedigree analysis have been shown in Figure 4.13.

As you have studied in this chapter, each and every feature in any organism is controlled by one or the other gene located on the DNA present in the chromosome. DNA is the carrier of genetic information. It is hence transmitted from one generation to the other without any change or alteration. However, changes or alteration do take place occasionally. Such an alteration or change in the genetic material is referred to as mutation. A number of disorders in human beings have been found to be associated with the inheritance of changed or altered genes or chromosomes.

4.8.2 Mendelian Disorders

Broadly, genetic disorders may be grouped into two categories – Mendelian disorders and Chromosomal disorders. Mendelian disorders are mainly determined by alteration or mutation in the single gene. These disorders are transmitted to the offspring on the same lines as we have studied in the principle of inheritance. The pattern of inheritance of such Mendelian disorders can be traced in a family by the pedigree analysis. Most common and prevalent Mendelian disorders are Haemophilia, Cystic fibrosis, Sickle-cell anaemia, Colour blindness, Phenylketonuria, Thalassemia, etc. It is important to mention here that such Mendelian disorders may be dominant or recessive. By pedigree analysis one can easily understand whether the trait in question is dominant or recessive. Similarly, the trait may also be linked to the sex chromosome as in case of haemophilia. It is evident that this X-linked recessive trait shows transmission from carrier female to male progeny. A representative pedigree is shown in Figure 4.14 for dominant and recessive traits. Discuss with your teacher and design pedigrees for characters linked to both autosomes and sex chromosome.

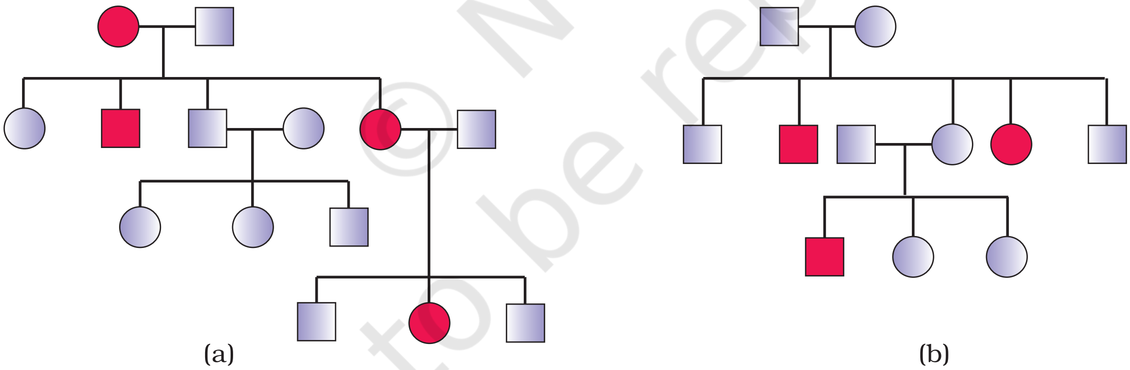

(a) (b)

Figure 4.14 Representative pedigree analysis of (a) Autosomal dominant trait (for example: Myotonic dystrophy) (b) Autosomal recessive trait (for example: Sickle-cell anaemia)

Colour Blindness : It is a sex-linked recessive disorder due to defect in either red or green cone of eye resulting in failure to discriminate between red and green colour. This defect is due to mutation in certain genes present in the X chromosome. It occurs in about 8 per cent of males and only about 0.4 per cent of females. This is because the genes that lead to red-green colour blindness are on the X chromosome. Males have only one X chromosome and females have two. The son of a woman who carries the gene has a 50 per cent chance of being colour blind. The mother is not herself colour blind because the gene is recessive. That means that its effect is suppressed by her matching dominant normal gene. A daughter will not normally be colour blind, unless her mother is a carrier and her father is colour blind.

Haemophilia : This sex linked recessive disease, which shows its transmission from unaffected carrier female to some of the male progeny has been widely studied. In this disease, a single protein that is a part of the cascade of proteins involved in the clotting of blood is affected. Due to this, in an affected individual a simple cut will result in non-stop bleeding. The heterozygous female (carrier) for haemophilia may transmit the disease to sons. The possibility of a female becoming a haemophilic is extremely rare because mother of such a female has to be at least carrier and the father should be haemophilic (unviable in the later stage of life). The family pedigree of Queen Victoria shows a number of haemophilic descendents as she was a carrier of the disease.

Sickle-cell anaemia : This is an autosome linked recessive trait that can be transmitted from parents to the offspring when both the partners are carrier for the gene (or heterozygous). The disease is controlled by a single pair of allele, Hb^A and Hb^S. Out of the three possible genotypes only homozygous individuals for Hb^S (Hb^SHb^S) show the diseased phenotype. Heterozygous (Hb^AHb^S) individuals appear apparently unaffected but they are carrier of the disease as there is 50 per cent probability of transmission of the mutant gene to the progeny, thus exhibiting sickle-cell trait (Figure 4.15). The defect is caused by the substitution of Glutamic acid

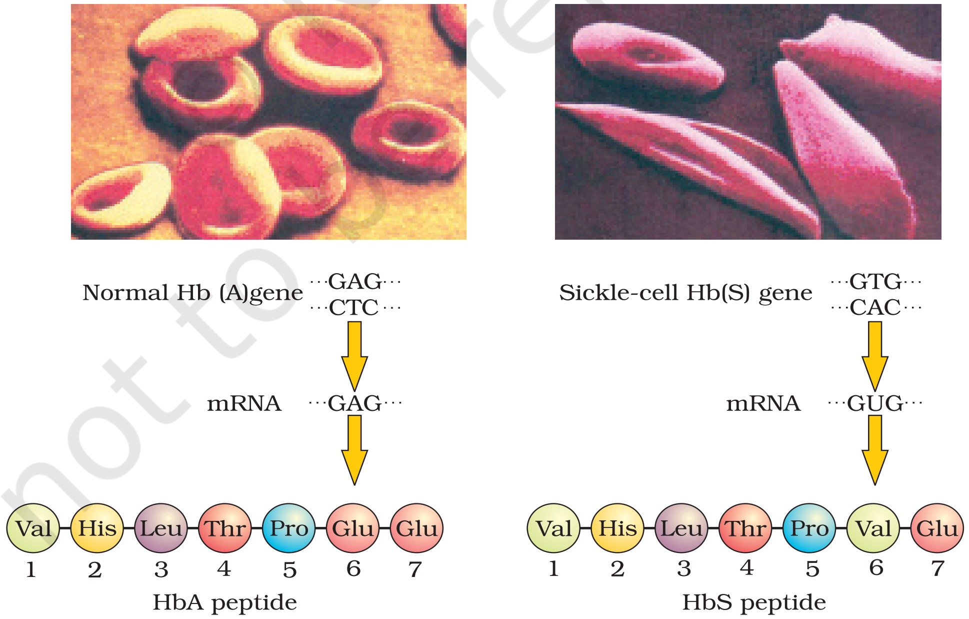


Figure 4.15 Micrograph of the red blood cells and the amino acid composition of the relevant portion of β-chain of haemoglobin: (a) From a normal individual; (b) From an individual with sickle-cell anaemia

(Glu) by Valine (Val) at the sixth position of the beta globin chain of the haemoglobin molecule. The substitution of amino acid in the globin protein results due to the single base substitution at the sixth codon of the beta globin gene from GAG to GUG. The mutant haemoglobin molecule undergoes polymerisation under low oxygen tension causing the change in the shape of the RBC from biconcave disc to elongated sickle like structure (Figure 4.15).

Phenylketonuria : This inborn error of metabolism is also inherited as the autosomal recessive trait. The affected individual lacks an enzyme that converts the amino acid phenylalanine into tyrosine. As a result of this phenylalanine is accumulated and converted into phenylpyruvic acid and other derivatives. Accumulation of these in brain results in mental retardation. These are also excreted through urine because of its poor absorption by kidney.

Thalassemia : This is also an autosome-linked recessive blood disease transmitted from parents to the offspring when both the partners are unaffected carrier for the gene (or heterozygous). The defect could be due to either mutation or deletion which ultimately results in reduced rate of synthesis of one of the globin chains (α and β chains) that make up haemoglobin. This causes the formation of abnormal haemoglobin molecules resulting into anaemia which is characteristic of the disease. Thalassemia can be classified according to which chain of the haemoglobin molecule is affected. In α Thalassemia, production of α globin chain is affected while in β Thalassemia, production of β globin chain is affected. α Thalassemia is controlled by two closely linked genes HBA1 and HBA2 on chromosome 16 of each parent and it is observed due to mutation or deletion of one or more of the four genes. The more genes affected, the less alpha globin molecules produced. While β Thalassemia is controlled by a single gene HBB on chromosome 11 of each parent and occurs due to mutation of one or both the genes. Thalassemia differs from sickle-cell anaemia in that the former is a quantitative problem of synthesising too few globin molecules while the latter is a qualitative problem of synthesising an incorrectly functioning globin.

4.8.3 Chromosomal Disorders

The chromosomal disorders on the other hand are caused due to absence or excess or abnormal arrangement of one or more chromosomes.

Failure of segregation of chromatids during cell division cycle results in the gain or loss of a chromosome(s), called **aneuploidy**. For example, Down's syndrome results in the gain of extra copy of chromosome 21. Similarly, Turner's syndrome results due to loss of an X chromosome in human females. Failure of cytokinesis after telophase stage of cell division results in an increase in a whole set of chromosomes in an organism and, this phenomenon is known as **polyploidy**. This condition is often seen in plants.

The total number of chromosomes in a normal human cell is 46 (23 pairs). Out of these 22 pairs are autosomes and one pair of chromosomes are sex chromosome. Sometimes, though rarely, either an additional copy of a chromosome may be included in an individual or an

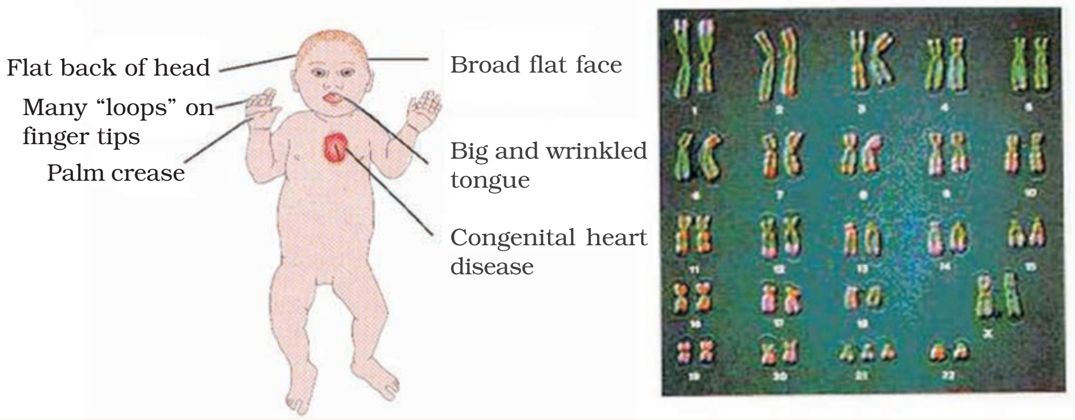


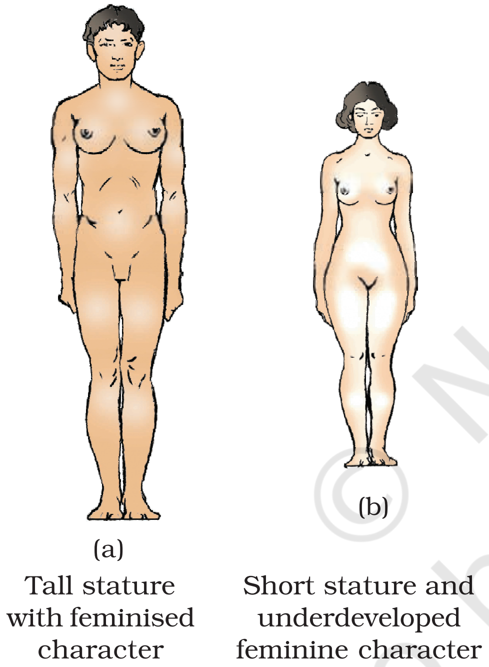
Figure 4.16 *A representative figure showing an individual inflicted with Down's syndrome and the corresponding chromosomes of the individual*

individual may lack one of any one pair of chromosomes. These situations are known as trisomy or monosomy of a chromosome, respectively. Such a situation leads to very serious consequences in the individual. Down's syndrome, Turner's syndrome, Klinefelter's syndrome are common examples of chromosomal disorders.

Down's Syndrome : The cause of this genetic disorder is the presence of an additional copy of the chromosome number 21 (trisomy of 21). This disorder was first described by Langdon Down (1866). The affected individual is short statured with small round head, furrowed tongue and partially open mouth (Figure 4.16). Palm is broad with characteristic palm crease. Physical, psychomotor and mental development is retarded.

Klinefelter's Syndrome : This genetic disorder is also caused due to the presence of an additional copy of X-chromosome resulting into a karyotype of 47, XXY. Such an individual has overall masculine development, however, the feminine development (development of breast, i.e., Gynaecomastia) is also expressed (Figure 4.17 a). Such individuals are sterile.

Turner's Syndrome : Such a disorder is caused due to the absence of one of the X chromosomes, i.e., 45 with X0, Such females are sterile as ovaries are rudimentary besides other features including lack of other secondary sexual characters (Figure 4.17 b).


(a)
Tall stature with feminised character

(b)
Short stature and underdeveloped feminine character

Figure 4.17 Diagrammatic representation of genetic disorders due to sex chromosome composition in humans : (a) Klinefelter Syndrome; (b) Turner's Syndrome

SUMMARY

Genetics is a branch of biology which deals with principles of inheritance and its practices. Progeny resembling the parents in morphological and physiological features has attracted the attention of many biologists. Mendel was the first to study this phenomenon systematically. While studying the pattern of inheritance in pea plants of contrasting characters, Mendel proposed the principles of inheritance, which are today referred to as 'Mendel's Laws of Inheritance'. He proposed that the 'factors' (later named as genes) regulating the characters are found in pairs known as alleles. He observed that the expression of the characters in the offspring follow a definite pattern in different–first generations (F_1), second (F_2) and so on. Some characters are dominant over others. The dominant characters are expressed when factors are in heterozygous condition (Law of Dominance). The recessive characters are only expressed in homozygous conditions. The characters never blend in heterozygous condition. A recessive character that was not expressed in heterozygous conditon may be expressed again when it becomes homozygous. Hence, characters segregate while formation of gametes (Law of Segregation).

Not all characters show true dominance. Some characters show incomplete, and some show co-dominance. When Mendel studied the inheritance of two characters together, it was found that the factors independently assort and combine in all permutations and combinations (Law of Independent Assortment). Different combinations of gametes are theoretically represented in a square tabular form known as 'Punnett Square'. The factors (now known as gene) on chromosomes regulating the characters are called the genotype and the physical expression of the chraracters is called phenotype.

After knowing that the genes are located on the chromosomes, a good correlation was drawn between Mendel's laws : segregation and assortment of chromosomes during meiosis. The Mendel's laws were extended in the form of 'Chromosomal Theory of Inheritance'. Later, it was found that Mendel's law of independent assortment does not hold true for the genes that were located on the same chromosomes. These genes were called as 'linked genes'. Closely located genes assorted together, and distantly located genes, due to recombination, assorted independently. Linkage maps, therefore, corresponded to arrangement of genes on a chromosome.

Many genes were linked to sexes also, and called as sex-linked genes. The two sexes (male and female) were found to have a set of chromosomes which were common, and another set which was different. The chromosomes which were different in two sexes were named as sex chromosomes. The remaining set was named as autosomes. In humans, a normal female has 22 pairs of autosomes and a pair of sex chromosomes (XX). A male has 22 pairs of autosomes and a pair of sex chromosome as XY. In chicken, sex chromosomes in male are ZZ, and in females are ZW.

Mutation is defined as change in the genetic material. A point mutation is a change of a single base pair in DNA. Sickle-cell anemia is caused due to change of one base in the gene coding for beta-chain of hemoglobin. Inheritable mutations can be studied by generating a pedigree of a family. Some mutations involve changes in whole set of chromosomes (polyploidy) or change in a subset of chromosome number (aneuploidy). This helped in understanding the mutational basis of genetic disorders. Down's syndrome is due to trisomy of chromosome 21, where there is an extra copy of chromosome 21 and consequently the total number of chromosome becomes 47. In Turner's syndrome, one X chromosome is missing and the sex chromosome is as XO, and in Klinefelter's syndrome, the condition is XXY. These can be easily studied by analysis of Karyotypes.

EXERCISES

1. Mention the advantages of selecting pea plant for experiment by Mendel.
2. Differentiate between the following –
   (a) Dominance and Recessive
   (b) Homozygous and Heterozygous
   (c) Monohybrid and Dihybrid.
3. A diploid organism is heterozygous for 4 loci, how many types of gametes can be produced?
4. Explain the Law of Dominance using a monohybrid cross.
5. Define and design a test-cross.
6. Using a Punnett Square, workout the distribution of phenotypic features in the first filial generation after a cross between a homozygous female and a heterozygous male for a single locus.
7. When a cross in made between tall plant with yellow seeds (TtYy) and tall plant with green seed (Ttyy), what proportions of phenotype in the offspring could be expected to be
   (a) tall and green.
   (b) dwarf and green.
8. Two heterozygous parents are crossed. If the two loci are linked what would be the distribution of phenotypic features in F_1 generation for a dibybrid cross?
9. Briefly mention the contribution of T.H. Morgan in genetics.
10. What is pedigree analysis? Suggest how such an analysis, can be useful.
11. How is sex determined in human beings?
12. A child has blood group O. If the father has blood group A and mother blood group B, work out the genotypes of the parents and the possible genotypes of the other offsprings.
13. Explain the following terms with example
   (a) Co-dominance
   (b) Incomplete dominance
14. What is point mutation? Give one example.
15. Who had proposed the chromosomal theory of the inheritance?
16. Mention any two autosomal genetic disorders with their symptoms.

Watson-Crick model for
Semiconservative
DNA replication

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CHAPTER 5

MOLECULAR BASIS OF INHERITANCE

5.1 *The DNA*

5.2 *The Search for Genetic Material*

5.3 *RNA World*

5.4 *Replication*

5.5 *Transcription*

5.6 *Genetic Code*

5.7 *Translation*

5.8 *Regulation of Gene Expression*

5.9 *Human Genome Project*

5.10 *DNA Fingerprinting*

In the previous chapter, you have learnt the inheritance patterns and the genetic basis of such patterns. At the time of Mendel, the nature of those 'factors' regulating the pattern of inheritance was not clear. Over the next hundred years, the nature of the putative genetic material was investigated culminating in the realisation that DNA – deoxyribonucleic acid – is the genetic material, at least for the majority of organisms. In class XI you have learnt that nucleic acids are polymers of nucleotides.

Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and ribonucleic acid (RNA) are the two types of nucleic acids found in living systems. DNA acts as the genetic material in most of the organisms. RNA though it also acts as a genetic material in some viruses, mostly functions as a messenger. RNA has additional roles as well. It functions as adapter, structural, and in some cases as a catalytic molecule. In Class XI you have already learnt the structures of nucleotides and the way these monomer units are linked to form nucleic acid polymers. In this chapter we are going to discuss the structure of DNA, its replication, the process of making RNA from DNA (transcription), the genetic code that determines the sequences of amino acids in proteins, the process of protein synthesis (translation) and elementary basis of their regulation. The determination of complete nucleotide sequence of human genome during last decade has set in a new era of genomics. In the last section, the essentials of human genome sequencing and its consequences will also be discussed.

Let us begin our discussion by first understanding the structure of the most interesting molecule in the living system, that is, the DNA. In subsequent sections, we will understand that why it is the most abundant genetic material, and what its relationship is with RNA.

5.1 The DNA

DNA is a long polymer of deoxyribonucleotides. The length of DNA is usually defined as number of nucleotides (or a pair of nucleotide referred to as base pairs) present in it. This also is the characteristic of an organism. For example, a bacteriophage known as $\phi \times 174$ has 5386 nucleotides, Bacteriophage lambda has 48502 base pairs (bp), *Escherichia coli* has 4.6×10^6 bp, and haploid content of human DNA is 3.3×10^9 bp. Let us discuss the structure of such a long polymer.

5.1.1 Structure of Polynucleotide Chain

Let us recapitulate the chemical structure of a polynucleotide chain (DNA or RNA). A nucleotide has three components – a nitrogenous base, a pentose sugar (ribose in case of RNA, and deoxyribose for DNA), and a phosphate group. There are two types of nitrogenous bases – Purines (Adenine and Guanine), and Pyrimidines (Cytosine, Uracil and Thymine). Cytosine is common for both DNA and RNA and Thymine is present in DNA. Uracil is present in RNA at the place of Thymine. A nitrogenous base is linked to the OH of 1′C pentose sugar through a N-glycosidic linkage to form a nucleoside, such as adenosine or deoxyadenosine, guanosine or deoxyguanosine, cytidine or deoxycytidine and uridine or deoxythymidine. When a phosphate group is linked to OH of 5′C of a nucleoside through phosphoester linkage, a corresponding nucleotide (or deoxynucleotide depending upon the type of sugar present) is formed. Two nucleotides are linked through 3′-5′ phosphodiester linkage to form a dinucleotide. More nucleotides can be joined in such a manner to form a polynucleotide chain. A polymer thus formed has at one end a free

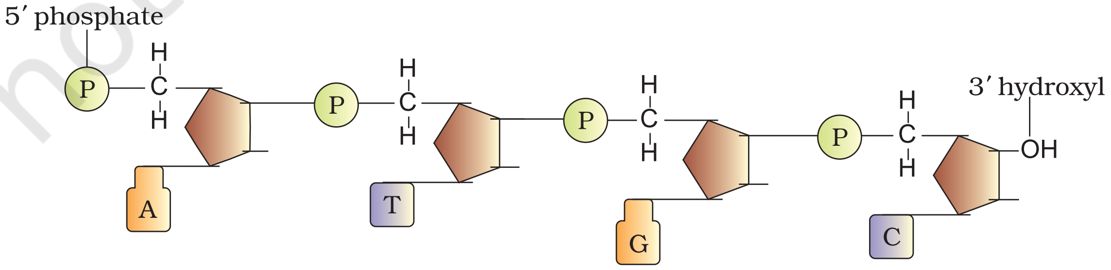


Figure 5.1 A Polynucleotide chain

phosphate moiety at 5′-end of sugar, which is referred to as 5'-end of polynucleotide chain. Similarly, at the other end of the polymer the sugar has a free OH of 3′C group which is referred to as 3′-end of the polynucleotide chain. The backbone of a polynucleotide chain is formed due to sugar and phosphates. The nitrogenous bases linked to sugar moiety project from the backbone (Figure 5.1).

In RNA, every nucleotide residue has an additional –OH group present at 2′-position in the ribose. Also, in RNA the uracil is found at the place of thymine (5-methyl uracil, another chemical name for thymine).

DNA as an acidic substance present in nucleus was first identified by Friedrich Meischer in 1869. He named it as 'Nuclein'. However, due to technical limitation in isolating such a long polymer intact, the elucidation of structure of DNA remained elusive for a very long period of time. It was only in 1953 that James Watson and Francis Crick, based on the X-ray diffraction data produced by Maurice Wilkins and Rosalind Franklin, proposed a very simple but famous **Double Helix** model for the structure of DNA. One of the hallmarks of their proposition was base pairing between the two strands of polynucleotide chains. However, this proposition was also based on the observation of Erwin Chargaff that for a double stranded DNA, the ratios between **Adenine** and **Thymine** and **Guanine** and **Cytosine** are constant and equals one.

The base pairing confers a very unique property to the polynucleotide chains. They are said to be complementary to each other, and therefore if the sequence of bases in one strand is known then the sequence in other strand can be predicted. Also, if each strand from a DNA (let us call it as a parental DNA) acts as a template for synthesis of a new strand, the two double stranded DNA (let us call them as daughter DNA) thus, produced would be identical to the parental DNA molecule. Because of this, the genetic implications of the structure of DNA became very clear.

The salient features of the Double-helix structure of DNA are as follows:

(i) It is made of two polynucleotide chains, where the backbone is constituted by sugar-phosphate, and the bases project inside.

(ii) The two chains have anti-parallel polarity. It means, if one chain has the polarity 5′→3′, the other has 3′→5′.

(iii) The bases in two strands are paired through hydrogen bond (H-bonds) forming base pairs (bp). Adenine forms two hydrogen bonds with Thymine from opposite strand and vice-versa. Similarly, Guanine is bonded with Cytosine with three H-bonds. As a result, always a purine comes opposite to a pyrimidine. This generates approximately uniform distance between the two strands of the helix (Figure 5.2).

(iv) The two chains are coiled in a right-handed fashion. The pitch of the helix is 3.4 nm (a nanometre is one billionth of a metre, that is 10^{-9} m) and there are roughly 10 bp in each

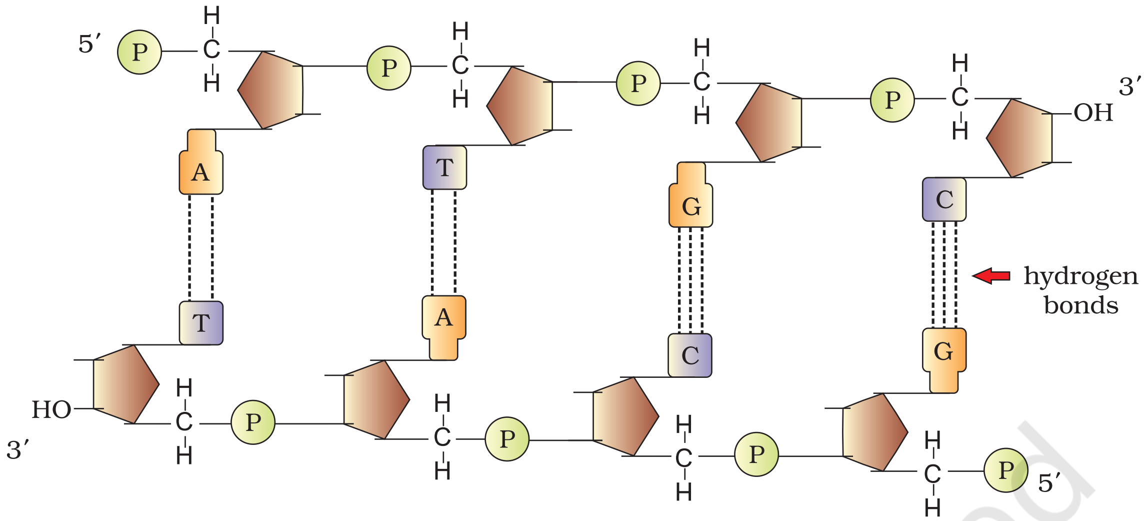

5′
P
H
C
H
A
T
G
C
3′
OH
hydrogen bonds
T
A
C
G
HO
3′
5′

Figure 5.2 Double stranded polynucleotide chain

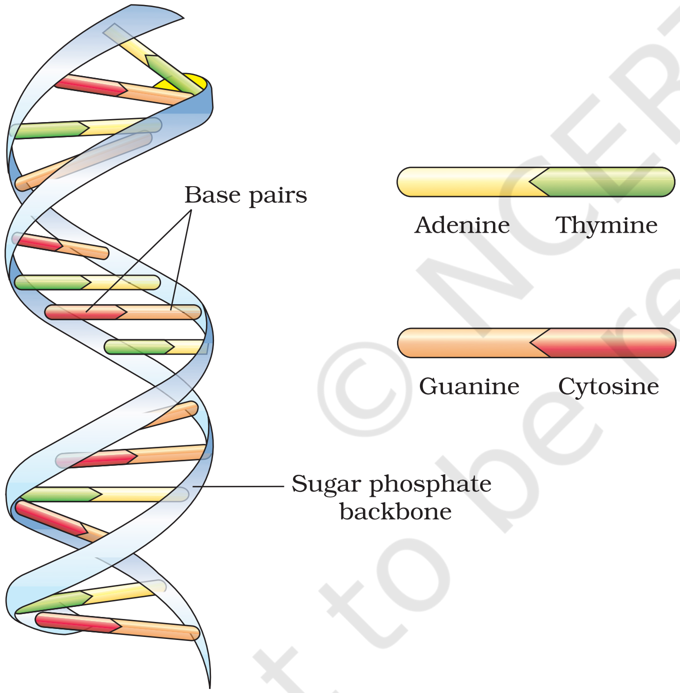

Base pairs
Adenine
Thymine
Guanine
Cytosine
Sugar phosphate backbone

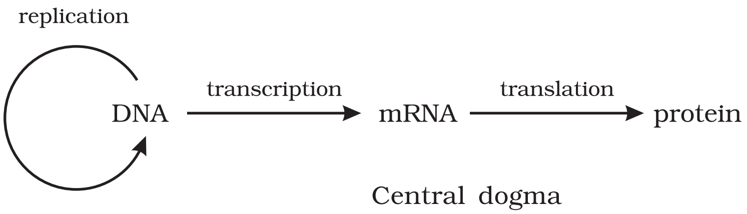
Figure 5.3 DNA double helix

turn. Consequently, the distance between a bp in a helix is approximately 0.34 nm.

(v) The plane of one base pair stacks over the other in double helix. This, in addition to H-bonds, confers stability of the helical structure (Figure 5.3).

Compare the structure of purines and pyrimidines. Can you find out why the distance between two polynucleotide chains in DNA remains almost constant?

The proposition of a double helix structure for DNA and its simplicity in explaining the genetic implication became revolutionary. Very soon, Francis Crick proposed the Central dogma in molecular biology, which states that the genetic information flows from DNA→RNA→Protein.


replication
DNA
transcription
mRNA
translation
protein

Central dogma

In some viruses the flow of information is in reverse direction, that is, from RNA to DNA. *Can you suggest a simple name to the process?*

5.1.2 Packaging of DNA Helix

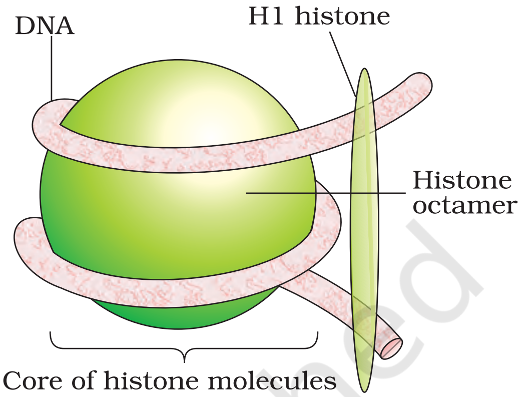


Figure 5.4a Nucleosome

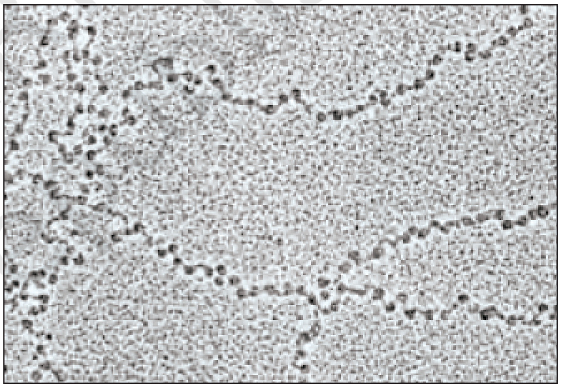


Figure 5.4b EM picture - 'Beads-on-String'

Taken the distance between two consecutive base pairs as 0.34 nm (0.34×10^{-9} m), if the length of DNA double helix in a typical mammalian cell is calculated (simply by multiplying the total number of bp with distance between two consecutive bp, that is, 6.6×10^{9} bp $\times$ 0.34×10^{-9} m/bp), it comes out to be approximately 2.2 metres. A length that is far greater than the dimension of a typical nucleus (approximately 10^{-6} m). How is such a long polymer packaged in a cell?

If the length of E. coli DNA is 1.36 mm, can you calculate the number of base pairs in E.coli?

In prokaryotes, such as, *E. coli*, though they do not have a defined nucleus, the DNA is not scattered throughout the cell. DNA (being negatively charged) is held with some proteins (that have positive charges) in a region termed as 'nucleoid'. The DNA in nucleoid is organised in large loops held by proteins.

In eukaryotes, this organisation is much more complex. There is a set of positively charged, basic proteins called **histones**. A protein acquires charge depending upon the abundance of amino acids residues with charged side chains. Histones are rich in the basic amino acid residues lysine and arginine. Both the amino acid residues carry positive charges in their side chains. Histones are organised to form a unit of eight molecules called **histone octamer**. The negatively charged DNA is wrapped around the positively charged histone octamer to form a structure called **nucleosome** (Figure 5.4 a). A typical nucleosome contains 200 bp of DNA helix. Nucleosomes constitute the repeating unit of a structure in nucleus called **chromatin,** thread-like stained (coloured) bodies seen in nucleus. The nucleosomes in chromatin are seen as 'beads-on-string' structure when viewed under electron microscope (EM) (Figure 5.4 b).

Theoretically, how many such beads (nucleosomes) do you imagine are present in a mammalian cell?

The beads-on-string structure in chromatin is packaged to form chromatin fibers that are further coiled and condensed at metaphase stage of cell division to form chromosomes. The packaging of chromatin at higher level requires additional set of proteins that collectively are referred to as

Non-histone Chromosomal (NHC) proteins. In a typical nucleus, some region of chromatin are loosely packed (and stains light) and are referred to as **euchromatin**. The chromatin that is more densely packed and stains dark are called as **Heterochromatin**. Euchromatin is said to be transcriptionally active chromatin, whereas heterochromatin is inactive.

5.2 The Search for Genetic Material

Even though the discovery of nuclein by Meischer and the proposition for principles of inheritance by Mendel were almost at the same time, but that the DNA acts as a genetic material took long to be discovered and proven. By 1926, the quest to determine the mechanism for genetic inheritance had reached the molecular level. Previous discoveries by Gregor Mendel, Walter Sutton, Thomas Hunt Morgan and numerous other scientists had narrowed the search to the chromosomes located in the nucleus of most cells. But the question of what molecule was actually the genetic material, had not been answered.

Transforming Principle

In 1928, Frederick Griffith, in a series of experiments with *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (bacterium responsible for pneumonia), witnessed a miraculous transformation in the bacteria. During the course of his experiment, a living organism (bacteria) had changed in physical form.

When *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (pneumococcus) bacteria are grown on a culture plate, some produce smooth shiny colonies (S) while others produce rough colonies (R). This is because the S strain bacteria have a mucous (polysaccharide) coat, while R strain does not. Mice infected with the S strain (virulent) die from pneumonia infection but mice infected with the R strain do not develop pneumonia.

S strain ⟶ Inject into mice ⟶ Mice die

R strain ⟶ Inject into mice ⟶ Mice live

Griffith was able to kill bacteria by heating them. He observed that heat-killed S strain bacteria injected into mice did not kill them. When he

S strain (heat-killed) ⟶ Inject into mice ⟶ Mice live

S strain (heat-killed) + R strain (live) ⟶ Inject into mice ⟶ Mice die injected a mixture of heat-killed S and live R bacteria, the mice died. Moreover, he recovered living S bacteria from the dead mice.

He concluded that the R strain bacteria had somehow been **transformed** by the heat-killed S strain bacteria. Some 'transforming principle', transferred from the heat-killed S strain, had enabled the R strain to synthesise a smooth polysaccharide coat and become virulent. This must be due to the transfer of the genetic material. However, the biochemical nature of genetic material was not defined from his experiments.

Biochemical Characterisation of Transforming Principle

Prior to the work of Oswald Avery, Colin MacLeod and Maclyn McCarty (1933-44), the genetic material was thought to be a protein. They worked to determine the biochemical nature of 'transforming principle' in Griffith's experiment.

They purified biochemicals (proteins, DNA, RNA, etc.) from the heat-killed S cells to see which ones could transform live R cells into S cells. They discovered that DNA alone from S bacteria caused R bacteria to become transformed.

They also discovered that protein-digesting enzymes (proteases) and RNA-digesting enzymes (RNases) did not affect transformation, so the transforming substance was not a protein or RNA. Digestion with DNase did inhibit transformation, suggesting that the DNA caused the transformation. They concluded that DNA is the hereditary material, but not all biologists were convinced.

Can you think of any difference between DNAs and DNase?

5.2.1 The Genetic Material is DNA

The unequivocal proof that DNA is the genetic material came from the experiments of Alfred Hershey and Martha Chase (1952). They worked with viruses that infect bacteria called bacteriophages.

The bacteriophage attaches to the bacteria and its genetic material then enters the bacterial cell. The bacterial cell treats the viral genetic material as if it was its own and subsequently manufactures more virus particles. Hershey and Chase worked to discover whether it was protein or DNA from the viruses that entered the bacteria.

They grew some viruses on a medium that contained radioactive phosphorus and some others on medium that contained radioactive sulfur. Viruses grown in the presence of radioactive phosphorus contained radioactive DNA but not radioactive protein because DNA contains phosphorus but protein does not. Similarly, viruses grown on radioactive sulfur contained radioactive protein but not radioactive DNA because DNA does not contain sulfur.

Radioactive phages were allowed to attach to *E. coli* bacteria. Then, as the infection proceeded, the viral coats were removed from the bacteria by agitating them in a blender. The virus particles were separated from the bacteria by spinning them in a centrifuge.

Bacteria which was infected with viruses that had radioactive DNA were radioactive, indicating that DNA was the material that passed from the virus to the bacteria. Bacteria that were infected with viruses that had radioactive proteins were not radioactive. This indicates that proteins did not enter the bacteria from the viruses. DNA is therefore the genetic material that is passed from virus to bacteria (Figure 5.5).

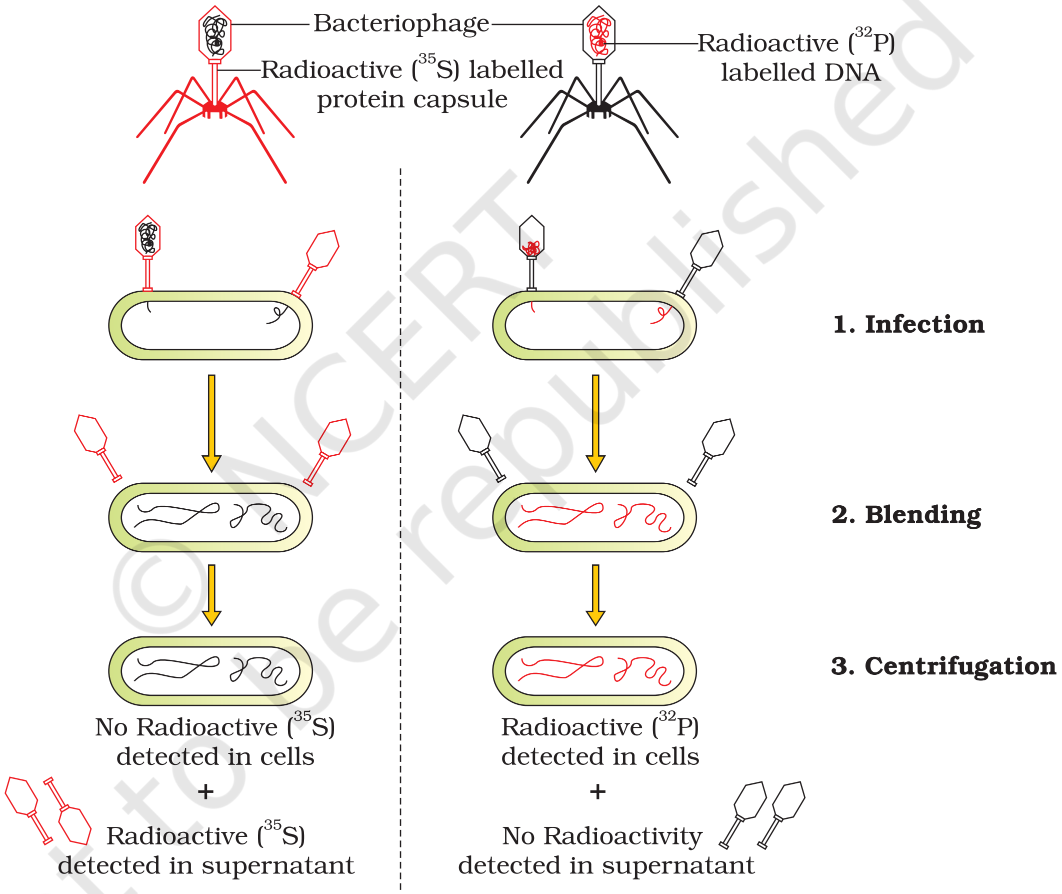

Bacteriophage
Radioactive (^{35}S) labelled protein capsule
Radioactive (^{32}P) labelled DNA
1. Infection
2. Blending
3. Centrifugation
No Radioactive (^{35}S) detected in cells
+
Radioactive (^{35}S) detected in supernatant
Radioactive (^{32}P) detected in cells
+
No Radioactivity detected in supernatant

Figure 5.5 The Hershey-Chase experiment

5.2.2 Properties of Genetic Material (DNA versus RNA)

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that the debate between proteins versus DNA as the genetic material was unequivocally resolved from Hershey-Chase experiment. It became an established fact that it is DNA that acts as genetic material. However, it subsequently became clear that in some viruses, RNA is the genetic material (for example, Tobacco Mosaic viruses, QB bacteriophage, etc.). Answer to some of the questions such as, why DNA is the predominant genetic material, whereas RNA performs dynamic functions of messenger and adapter has to be found from the differences between chemical structures of the two nucleic acid molecules.

Can you recall the two chemical differences between DNA and RNA?

A molecule that can act as a genetic material must fulfill the following criteria:

(i) It should be able to generate its replica (Replication).
(ii) It should be stable chemically and structurally.
(iii) It should provide the scope for slow changes (mutation) that are required for evolution.
(iv) It should be able to express itself in the form of 'Mendelian Characters'.

If one examines each requirement one by one, because of rule of base pairing and complementarity, both the nucleic acids (DNA and RNA) have the ability to direct their duplications. The other molecules in the living system, such as proteins fail to fulfill first criteria itself.

The genetic material should be stable enough not to change with different stages of life cycle, age or with change in physiology of the organism. Stability as one of the properties of genetic material was very evident in Griffith's 'transforming principle' itself that heat, which killed the bacteria, at least did not destroy some of the properties of genetic material. This now can easily be explained in light of the DNA that the two strands being complementary if separated by heating come together, when appropriate conditions are provided. Further, 2′-OH group present at every nucleotide in RNA is a reactive group and makes RNA labile and easily degradable. RNA is also now known to be catalytic, hence reactive. Therefore, DNA chemically is less reactive and structurally more stable when compared to RNA. Therefore, among the two nucleic acids, the DNA is a better genetic material.

In fact, the presence of thymine at the place of uracil also confers additional stability to DNA. (Detailed discussion about this requires understanding of the process of repair in DNA, and you will study these processes in higher classes.)

Both DNA and RNA are able to mutate. In fact, RNA being unstable, mutate at a faster rate. Consequently, viruses having RNA genome and having shorter life span mutate and evolve faster.

RNA can directly code for the synthesis of proteins, hence can easily express the characters. DNA, however, is dependent on RNA for synthesis of proteins. The protein synthesising machinery has evolved around RNA. The above discussion indicate that both RNA and DNA can function as genetic material, but DNA being more stable is preferred for storage of genetic information. For the transmission of genetic information, RNA is better.

5.3 RNA World

From foregoing discussion, an immediate question becomes evident – which is the first genetic material? It shall be discussed in detail in the chapter on chemical evolution, but briefly, we shall highlight some of the facts and points.

RNA was the first genetic material. There is now enough evidence to suggest that essential life processes (such as metabolism, translation, splicing, etc.), evolved around RNA. RNA used to act as a genetic material as well as a catalyst (there are some important biochemical reactions in living systems that are catalysed by RNA catalysts and not by protein enzymes). But, RNA being a catalyst was reactive and hence unstable. Therefore, DNA has evolved from RNA with chemical modifications that make it more stable. DNA being double stranded and having complementary strand further resists changes by evolving a process of repair.

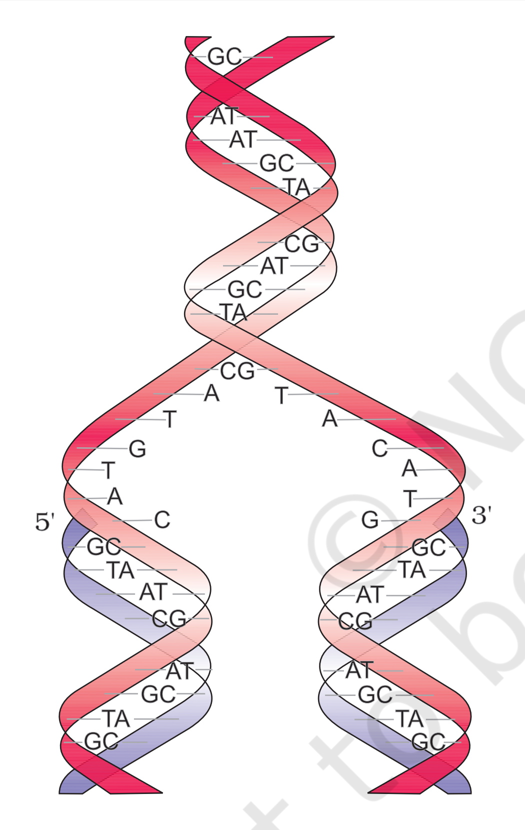


Figure 5.6 Watson-Crick model for semiconservative DNA replication

5.4 Replication

While proposing the double helical structure for DNA, Watson and Crick had immediately proposed a scheme for replication of DNA. To quote their original statement that is as follows:

"It has not escaped our notice that the specific pairing we have postulated immediately suggests a possible copying mechanism for the genetic material" (Watson and Crick, 1953).

The scheme suggested that the two strands would separate and act as a template for the synthesis of new complementary strands. After the completion of replication, each DNA molecule would have one parental and one newly synthesised strand. This scheme was termed as **semiconservative** DNA replication (Figure 5.6).

5.4.1 The Experimental Proof

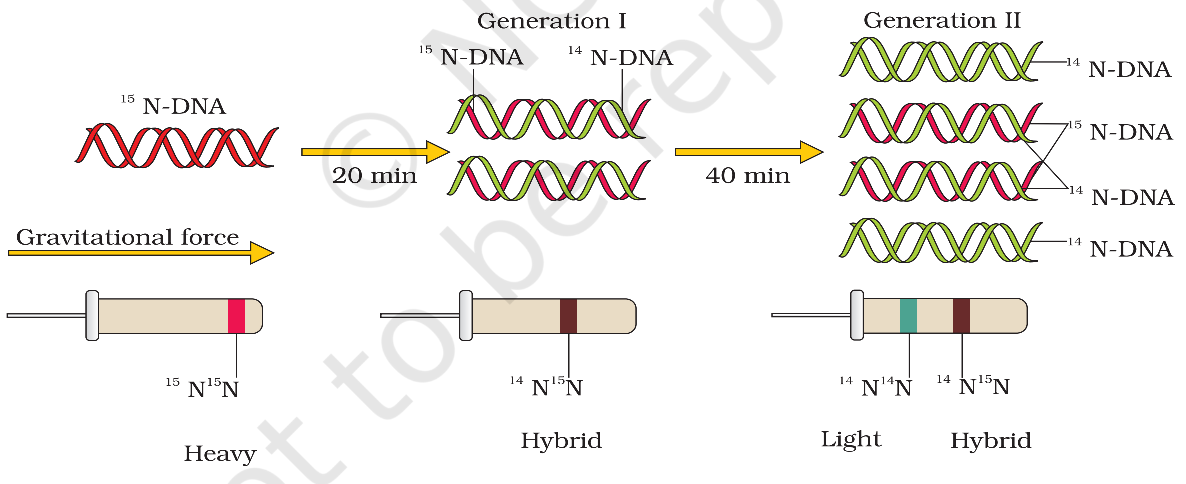
It is now proven that DNA replicates semiconservatively. It was shown first in *Escherichia coli* and subsequently in higher organisms, such as plants and human cells. Matthew Meselson and Franklin Stahl performed the following experiment in 1958:

(i) They grew *E. coli* in a medium containing $^{15}NH_4Cl$ (^{15}N is the heavy isotope of nitrogen) as the only nitrogen source for many generations. The result was that ^{15}N was incorporated into newly synthesised DNA (as well as other nitrogen containing compounds). This heavy DNA molecule could be distinguished from the normal DNA by centrifugation in a cesium chloride (CsCl) density gradient (Please note that ^{15}N is not a radioactive isotope, and it can be separated from ^{14}N only based on densities).

(ii) Then they transferred the cells into a medium with normal $^{14}NH_4Cl$ and took samples at various definite time intervals as the cells multiplied, and extracted the DNA that remained as double-stranded helices. The various samples were separated independently on CsCl gradients to measure the densities of DNA (Figure 5.7).

Can you recall what centrifugal force is, and think why a molecule with higher mass/density would sediment faster?

The results are shown in Figure 5.7.


Generation I
^{15}N-DNA
^{14}N-DNA
Generation II
^{14}N-DNA
^{15}N-DNA
^{14}N-DNA
^{14}N-DNA
^{15}N-DNA
20 min
40 min
Gravitational force
$^{15}N^{15}N$
$^{14}N^{15}N$
$^{14}N^{14}N$
$^{14}N^{15}N$
Heavy
Hybrid
Light
Hybrid

(Separation of DNA by Centrifugation)

Figure 5.7 Meselson and Stahl's Experiment

(iii) Thus, the DNA that was extracted from the culture one generation after the transfer from ^{15}N to ^{14}N medium [that is after 20 minutes; *E. coli* divides in 20 minutes] had a hybrid or intermediate density. DNA extracted from the culture after another generation [that is after 40 minutes, II generation] was composed of equal amounts of this hybrid DNA and of 'light' DNA.

If E. coli was allowed to grow for 80 minutes then what would be the proportions of light and hybrid densities DNA molecule?

Very similar experiments involving use of radioactive thymidine to detect distribution of newly synthesised DNA in the chromosomes was performed on *Vicia faba* (faba beans) by Taylor and colleagues in 1958. The experiments proved that the DNA in chromosomes also replicate semiconservatively.

5.4.2 The Machinery and the Enzymes

In living cells, such as *E. coli*, the process of replication requires a set of catalysts (enzymes). The main enzyme is referred to as DNA-dependent **DNA polymerase**, since it uses a DNA template to catalyse the polymerisation of deoxynucleotides. These enzymes are highly efficient enzymes as they have to catalyse polymerisation of a large number of nucleotides in a very short time. *E. coli* that has only 4.6×10^6 bp (compare it with human whose diploid content is 6.6×10^9 bp), completes the process of replication within 18 minutes; that means the average rate of polymerisation has to be approximately 2000 bp per second. Not only do these polymerases have to be fast, but they also have to catalyse the reaction with high degree of accuracy. Any mistake during replication would result into mutations. Furthermore, energetically replication is a very expensive process. Deoxyribonucleoside triphosphates serve dual purposes. In addition to acting as substrates, they provide energy for polymerisation reaction (the two terminal phosphates in a deoxynucleoside triphosphates are high-energy phosphates, same as in case of ATP).

In addition to DNA-dependent DNA polymerases, many additional enzymes are required to complete the process of replication with high degree of accuracy. For long DNA molecules, since the two strands of DNA cannot be separated in its entire length (due to very high energy requirement), the replication occur within a small opening of the DNA helix, referred to as **replication fork**. The DNA-dependent DNA polymerases catalyse polymerisation only in one direction, that is $5' \rightarrow 3'$. This creates some additional complications at the replicating fork. Consequently, on one strand (the template with polarity $3' \rightarrow 5'$), the replication is **continuous**, while on the other (the template with polarity $5' \rightarrow 3'$), it is **discontinuous**. The discontinuously synthesised fragments are later joined by the enzyme **DNA ligase** (Figure 5.8).

The DNA polymerases on their own cannot initiate the process of replication. Also the replication does not initiate randomly at any place in DNA. There is a definite region in *E. coli* DNA where the replication originates. Such regions are termed as **origin of replication**. It is because of the requirement of the origin of replication that a piece of DNA if needed to be propagated during recombinant DNA procedures, requires a vector. The vectors provide the origin of replication.

Further, not every detail of replication is understood well. In eukaryotes, the replication of DNA takes place at S-phase of the cell-cycle. The replication of DNA and cell division cycle should be highly coordinated. A failure in cell division after DNA replication results into polyploidy(a chromosomal anomaly). You will learn the detailed nature of origin and the processes occurring at this site, in higher classes.

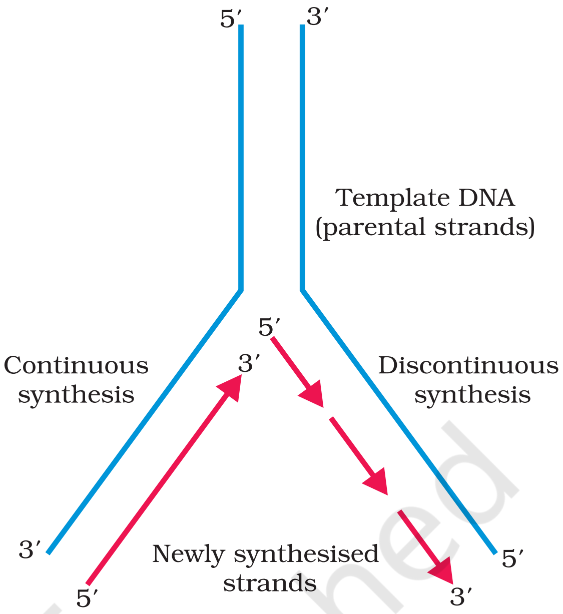


Figure 5.8 Replicating Fork

5.5 TRANSCRIPTION

The process of copying genetic information from one strand of the DNA into RNA is termed as **transcription**. Here also, the principle of complementarity governs the process of transcription, except the adenosine complements now forms base pair with uracil instead of thymine. However, unlike in the process of replication, which once set in, the total DNA of an organism gets duplicated, in transcription only a segment of DNA and only one of the strands is copied into RNA. This necessitates defining the boundaries that would demarcate the region and the strand of DNA that would be transcribed.

Why both the strands are not copied during transcription has the simple answer. First, if both strands act as a template, they would code for RNA molecule with different sequences (Remember complementarity does not mean identical), and in turn, if they code for proteins, the sequence of amino acids in the proteins would be different. Hence, one segment of the DNA would be coding for two different proteins, and this would complicate the genetic information transfer machinery. Second, the two RNA molecules if produced simultaneously would be complementary to each other, hence would form a double stranded RNA. This would prevent RNA from being translated into protein and the exercise of transcription would become a futile one.

5.5.1 Transcription Unit

A transcription unit in DNA is defined primarily by the three regions in the DNA:

(i) A Promoter
(ii) The Structural gene
(iii) A Terminator

There is a convention in defining the two strands of the DNA in the structural gene of a transcription unit. Since the two strands have opposite polarity and the **DNA-dependent RNA polymerase** also catalyse the polymerisation in only one direction, that is, 5′→3′, the strand that has the polarity 3′→5′ acts as a template, and is also referred to as **template strand**. The other strand which has the polarity (5′→3′) and the sequence same as RNA (except thymine at the place of uracil), is displaced during transcription. Strangely, this strand (which does not code for anything) is referred to as **coding strand**. All the reference point while defining a transcription unit is made with coding strand. To explain the point, a hypothetical sequence from a transcription unit is represented below:

3′-ATGCATGCATGCATGCATGCATGC-5′	Template Strand
5′-TACGTACGTACGTACGTACGTACG-3′	Coding Strand

Can you now write the sequence of RNA transcribed from the above DNA?

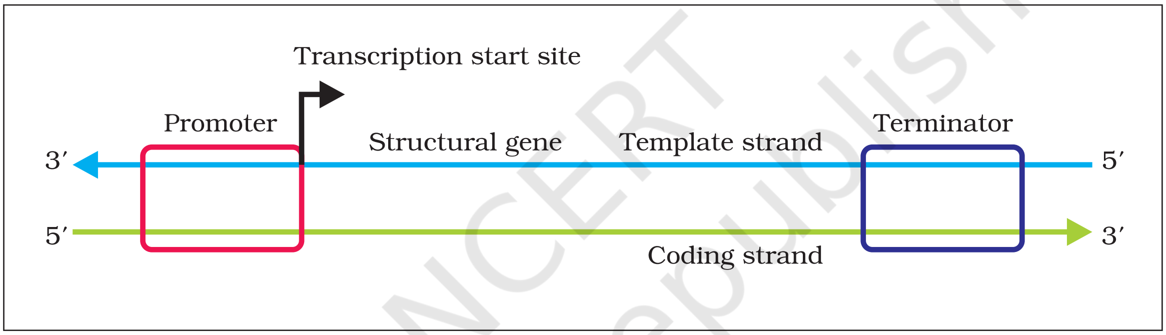


Figure 5.9 Schematic structure of a transcription unit

The **promoter** and **terminator** flank the **structural gene** in a transcription unit. The promoter is said to be located towards 5′-end (upstream) of the structural gene (the reference is made with respect to the polarity of coding strand). It is a DNA sequence that provides binding site for RNA polymerase, and it is the presence of a promoter in a transcription unit that also defines the template and coding strands. By switching its position with terminator, the definition of coding and template strands could be reversed. The terminator is located towards 3′-end (downstream) of the coding strand and it usually defines the end of the process of transcription (Figure 5.9). There are additional regulatory sequences that may be present further upstream or downstream to the promoter. Some of the properties of these sequences shall be discussed while dealing with regulation of gene expression.

5.5.2 Transcription Unit and the Gene

A gene is defined as the functional unit of inheritance. Though there is no ambiguity that the genes are located on the DNA, it is difficult to literally define a gene in terms of DNA sequence. The DNA sequence coding for tRNA or rRNA molecule also define a gene. However by defining a **cistron** as a segment of DNA coding for a polypeptide, the structural gene in a transcription unit could be said as **monocistronic** (mostly in eukaryotes) or **polycistronic** (mostly in bacteria or prokaryotes). In eukaryotes, the monocistronic structural genes have interrupted coding sequences – the genes in eukaryotes are split. The coding sequences or expressed sequences are defined as **exons**. Exons are said to be those sequence that appear in mature or processed RNA. The exons are interrupted by **introns**. Introns or intervening sequences do not appear in mature or processed RNA. The split-gene arrangement further complicates the definition of a gene in terms of a DNA segment.

Inheritance of a character is also affected by promoter and regulatory sequences of a structural gene. Hence, sometime the regulatory sequences are loosely defined as regulatory genes, even though these sequences do not code for any RNA or protein.

5.5.3 Types of RNA and the process of Transcription

In bacteria, there are three major types of RNAs: mRNA (messenger RNA), tRNA (transfer RNA), and rRNA (ribosomal RNA). All three RNAs are needed to synthesise a protein in a cell. The mRNA provides the template, tRNA brings aminoacids and reads the genetic code, and rRNAs play structural and catalytic role during translation. There is single DNA-dependent RNA polymerase that catalyses transcription of all types of RNA in bacteria. RNA polymerase binds to promoter and initiates transcription (**Initiation**). It uses nucleoside triphosphates as substrate

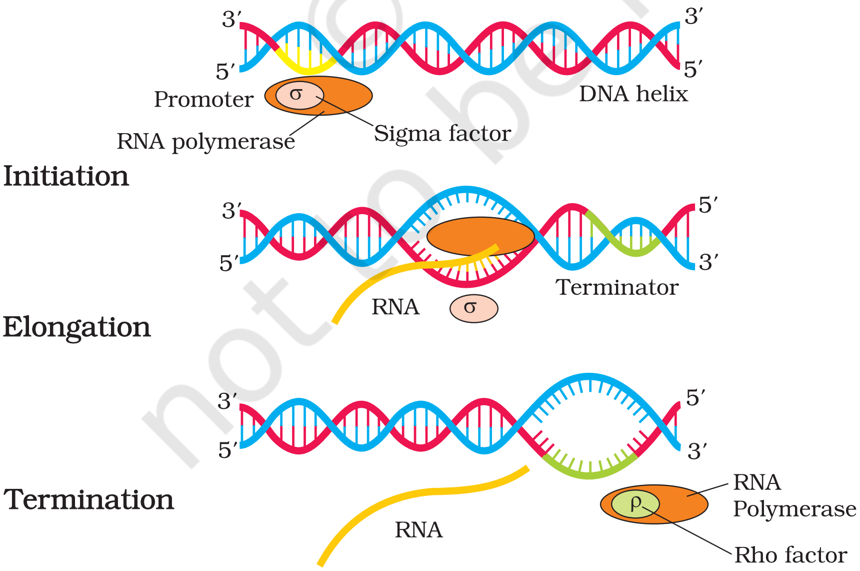


Figure 5.10 Process of Transcription in Bacteria

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and polymerises in a template depended fashion following the rule of complementarity. It somehow also facilitates opening of the helix and continues elongation. Only a short stretch of RNA remains bound to the enzyme. Once the polymerases reaches the terminator region, the nascent RNA falls off, so also the RNA polymerase. This results in **termination** of transcription.

An intriguing question is that how is the RNA polymerases able to catalyse all the three steps, which are initiation, elongation and termination. The RNA polymerase is only capable of catalysing the process of elongation. It associates transiently with **initiation-factor** (σ) and **termination-factor** (ρ) to initiate and terminate the transcription, respectively. Association with these factors alter the specificity of the RNA polymerase to either initiate or terminate (Figure 5.10).

In bacteria, since the mRNA does not require any processing to become active, and also since transcription and translation take place in the same compartment (there is no separation of cytosol and nucleus in bacteria), many times the translation can begin much before the mRNA is fully transcribed. Consequently, the transcription and translation can be coupled in bacteria.

In eukaryotes, there are two additional complexities –

(i) There are at least three RNA polymerases in the nucleus (in addition to the RNA polymerase found in the organelles). There is a clear cut division of labour. The RNA polymerase I transcribes **rRNAs**

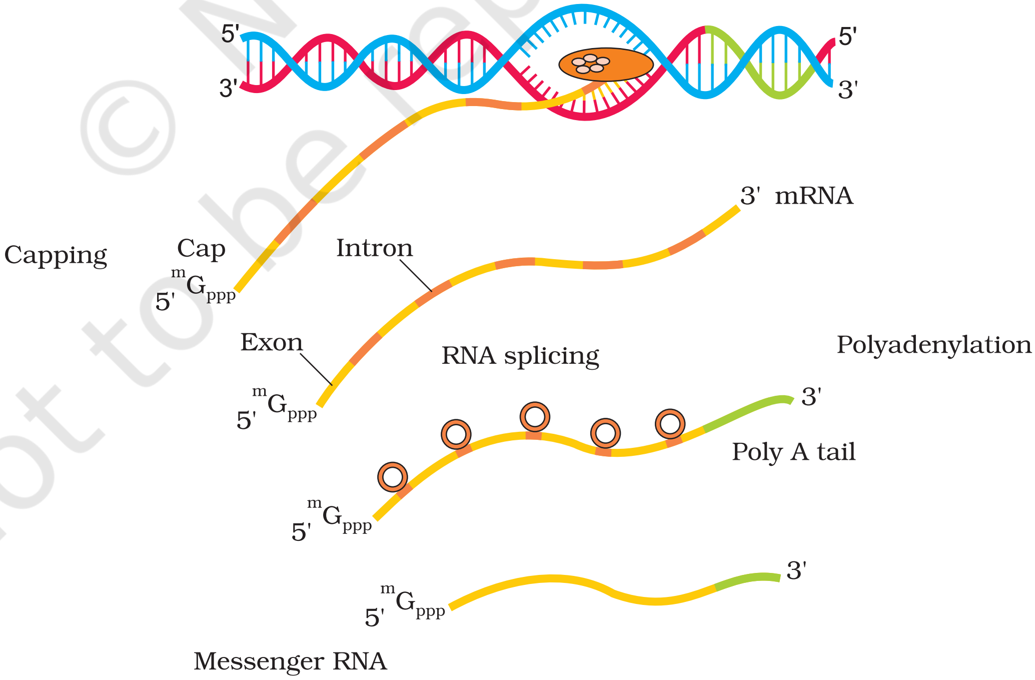

Figure 5.11 Process of Transcription in Eukaryotes

(28S, 18S, and 5.8S), whereas the RNA polymerase III is responsible for transcription of **tRNA**, **5srRNA**, and **snRNAs** (**small nuclear RNAs**). The RNA polymerase II transcribes precursor of mRNA, the **heterogeneous nuclear RNA** (**hnRNA**).

(ii) The second complexity is that the primary transcripts contain both the exons and the introns and are non-functional. Hence, it is subjected to a process called **splicing** where the introns are removed and exons are joined in a defined order. hnRNA undergoes additional processing called as capping and tailing. In **capping** an unusual nucleotide (methyl guanosine triphosphate) is added to the 5′-end of hnRNA. In **tailing**, adenylate residues (200-300) are added at 3′-end in a template independent manner. It is the fully processed hnRNA, now called mRNA, that is transported out of the nucleus for translation (Figure 5.11).

The significance of such complexities is now beginning to be understood. The split-gene arrangements represent probably an ancient feature of the genome. The presence of introns is reminiscent of antiquity, and the process of splicing represents the dominance of **RNA-world**. In recent times, the understanding of RNA and RNA-dependent processes in the living system have assumed more importance.

5.6 GENETIC CODE

During replication and transcription a nucleic acid was copied to form another nucleic acid. Hence, these processes are easy to conceptualise on the basis of complementarity. The process of translation requires transfer of genetic information from a polymer of nucleotides to synthesise a polymer of amino acids. Neither does any complementarity exist between nucleotides and amino acids, nor could any be drawn theoretically. There existed ample evidences, though, to support the notion that change in nucleic acids (genetic material) were responsible for change in amino acids in proteins. This led to the proposition of a genetic code that could direct the sequence of amino acids during synthesis of proteins.

If determining the biochemical nature of genetic material and the structure of DNA was very exciting, the proposition and deciphering of genetic code were most challenging. In a very true sense, it required involvement of scientists from several disciplines – physicists, organic chemists, biochemists and geneticists. It was George Gamow, a physicist, who argued that since there are only 4 bases and if they have to code for 20 amino acids, the code should constitute a combination of bases. He suggested that in order to code for all the 20 amino acids, the code should be made up of three nucleotides. This was a very bold proposition, because a permutation combination of 4^3 (4 × 4 × 4) would generate 64 codons; generating many more codons than required.

Providing proof that the codon was a triplet, was a more daunting task. The chemical method developed by Har Gobind Khorana was instrumental in synthesising RNA molecules with defined combinations of bases (homopolymers and copolymers). Marshall Nirenberg's cell-free system for protein synthesis finally helped the code to be deciphered. Severo Ochoa enzyme (polynucleotide phosphorylase) was also helpful in polymerising RNA with defined sequences in a template independent manner (enzymatic synthesis of RNA). Finally a checker-board for genetic code was prepared which is given in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: The Codons for the Various Amino Acids

First position	Second position				Third position
	U	C	A	G	
U	UUU Phe	UCU Ser	UAU Tyr	UGU Cys	U
	UUC Phe	UCC Ser	UAC Tyr	UGC Cys	C
	UUA Leu	UCA Ser	UAA Stop	UGA Stop	A
	UUG Leu	UCG Ser	UAG Stop	UGG Trp	G
C	CUU Leu	CCU Pro	CAU His	CGU Arg	U
	CUC Leu	CCC Pro	CAC His	CGC Arg	C
	CUA Leu	CCA Pro	CAA Gln	CGA Arg	A
	CUG Leu	CCG Pro	CAG Gln	CGG Arg	G
A	AUU Ile	ACU Thr	AAU Asn	AGU Ser	U
	AUC Ile	ACC Thr	AAC Asn	AGC Ser	C
	AUA Ile	ACA Thr	AAA Lys	AGA Arg	A
	AUG Met	ACG Thr	AAG Lys	AGG Arg	G
G	GUU Val	GCU Ala	GAU Asp	GGU Gly	U
	GUC Val	GCC Ala	GAC Asp	GGC Gly	C
	GUA Val	GCA Ala	GAA Glu	GGA Gly	A
	GUG Val	GCG Ala	GAG Glu	GGG Gly	G

The salient features of genetic code are as follows:

(i) The codon is triplet. 61 codons code for amino acids and 3 codons do not code for any amino acids, hence they function as stop codons.

(ii) Some amino acids are coded by more than one codon, hence the code is **degenerate**.

(iii) The codon is read in mRNA in a contiguous fashion. There are no punctuations.

(iv) The code is nearly **universal**: for example, from bacteria to human UUU would code for Phenylalanine (phe). Some exceptions to this rule have been found in mitochondrial codons, and in some protozoans.

(v) AUG has dual functions. It codes for Methionine (met) , and it also act as **initiator** codon.

(vi) UAA, UAG, UGA are stop terminator codons.

If following is the sequence of nucleotides in mRNA, predict the sequence of amino acid coded by it (take help of the checkerboard):

-AUG UUU UUC UUC UUU UUU UUC-

Now try the opposite. Following is the sequence of amino acids coded by an mRNA. Predict the nucleotide sequence in the RNA:

Met-Phe-Phe-Phe-Phe-Phe-Phe

Do you face any difficulty in predicting the opposite?

Can you now correlate which two properties of genetic code you have learnt?

5.6.1 Mutations and Genetic Code

The relationships between genes and DNA are best understood by mutation studies. You have studied about mutation and its effect in Chapter 4. Effects of large deletions and rearrangements in a segment of DNA are easy to comprehend. It may result in loss or gain of a gene and so a function. The effect of point mutations will be explained here. A classical example of point mutation is a change of single base pair in the gene for beta globin chain that results in the change of amino acid residue glutamate to valine. It results into a diseased condition called as **sickle cell anemia**. Effect of point mutations that inserts or deletes a base in structural gene can be better understood by following simple example.

Consider a statement that is made up of the following words each having three letters like genetic code.

RAM HAS RED CAP

If we insert a letter B in between HAS and RED and rearrange the statement, it would read as follows:

RAM HAS BRE DCA P

Similarly, if we now insert two letters at the same place, say BI'. Now it would read,

RAM HAS BIR EDC AP

Now we insert three letters together, say BIG, the statement would read

RAM HAS BIG RED CAP

The same exercise can be repeated, by deleting the letters R, E and D, one by one and rearranging the statement to make a triplet word.

RAM HAS EDC AP

RAM HAS DCA P

RAM HAS CAP

The conclusion from the above exercise is very obvious. Insertion or deletion of one or two bases changes the reading frame from the point of insertion or deletion. However, such mutations are referred to as

frameshift insertion or **deletion mutations**. Insertion or deletion of three or its multiple bases insert or delete in one or multiple codon hence one or multiple amino acids, and reading frame remains unaltered from that point onwards.

5.6.2 tRNA– the Adapter Molecule

From the very beginning of the proposition of code, it was clear to Francis Crick that there has to be a mechanism to read the code and also to link it to the amino acids, because amino acids have no structural specialities to read the code uniquely. He postulated the presence of an adapter molecule that would on one hand read the code and on other hand would bind to specific amino acids. The tRNA, then called sRNA (soluble RNA), was known before the genetic code was postulated. However, its role as an adapter molecule was assigned much later.

tRNA has an **anticodon loop** that has bases complementary to the code, and it also has an **amino acid acceptor end** to which it binds to amino acids. tRNAs are specific for each amino acid (Figure 5.12). For initiation, there is another specific tRNA that is referred to as **initiator tRNA**. There are no tRNAs for stop codons. In figure 5.12, the secondary structure of tRNA has been depicted that looks like a clover-leaf. In actual structure, the tRNA is a compact molecule which looks like inverted L.

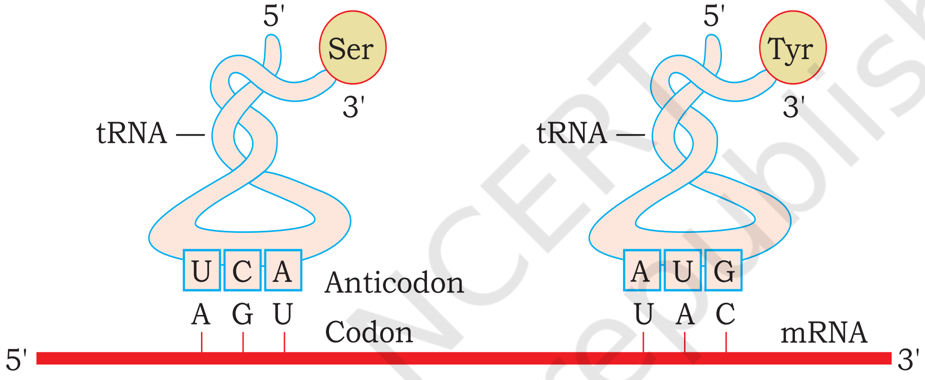

Figure 5.12 tRNA - the adapter molecule

5.7 TRANSLATION

Translation refers to the process of polymerisation of amino acids to form a polypeptide (Figure 5.13). The order and sequence of amino acids are defined by the sequence of bases in the mRNA. The amino acids are joined by a bond which is known as a peptide bond. Formation of a peptide bond requires energy. Therefore, in the first phase itself amino acids are activated in the presence of ATP and linked to their cognate tRNA–a process commonly called as **charging of tRNA** or **aminoacylation of tRNA** to be more specific. If two such charged tRNAs are brought close enough, the formation of peptide bond between them would be favoured energetically. The presence of a catalyst would enhance the rate of peptide bond formation.

The cellular factory responsible for synthesising proteins is the ribosome. The ribosome consists of structural RNAs and about 80 different proteins. In its inactive state, it exists as two subunits; a large subunit and a small subunit. When the small subunit encounters an mRNA, the process of translation of the mRNA to protein begins. There are two sites in the large subunit, for subsequent amino acids to bind to and thus, be close enough to each other for the formation of a peptide bond. The ribosome also acts as a catalyst (23S rRNA in bacteria is the enzyme- ribozyme) for the formation of peptide bond.

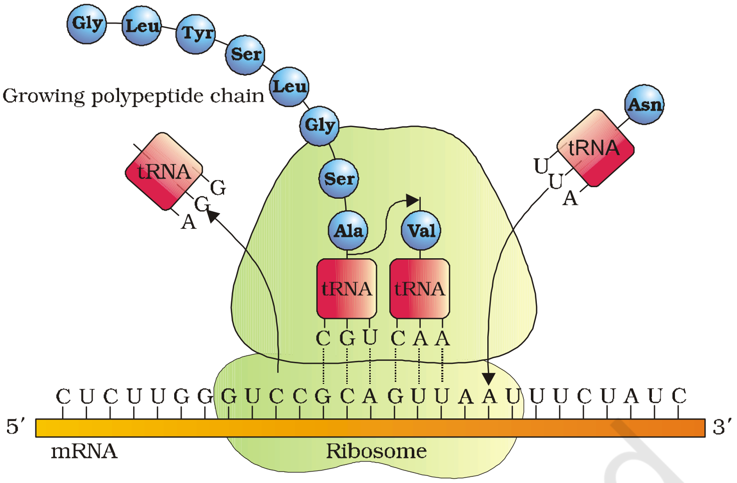
Gly
Leu
Tyr
Ser
Leu
Gly
Ser
Ala
Val
Asn
Growing polypeptide chain
tRNA
G
G
A
tRNA
U
U
A
tRNA
tRNA
C G U
C A A
C U C U U G G G U C C G C A G U U A A U U U C U A U C
5′
3′
mRNA
Ribosome

Figure 5.13 Translation

A translational unit in mRNA is the sequence of RNA that is flanked by the start codon (AUG) and the stop codon and codes for a polypeptide. An mRNA also has some additional sequences that are not translated and are referred as **untranslated regions** (**UTR**). The UTRs are present at both $5'$-end (before start codon) and at $3'$-end (after stop codon). They are required for efficient translation process.

For initiation, the ribosome binds to the mRNA at the start codon (AUG) that is recognised only by the initiator tRNA. The ribosome proceeds to the elongation phase of protein synthesis. During this stage, complexes composed of an amino acid linked to tRNA, sequentially bind to the appropriate codon in mRNA by forming complementary base pairs with the tRNA anticodon. The ribosome moves from codon to codon along the mRNA. Amino acids are added one by one, translated into Polypeptide sequences dictated by DNA and represented by mRNA. At the end, a **release factor** binds to the stop codon, terminating translation and releasing the complete polypeptide from the ribosome.

5.8 REGULATION OF GENE EXPRESSION

Regulation of gene expression refers to a very broad term that may occur at various levels. Considering that gene expression results in the formation of a polypeptide, it can be regulated at several levels. In eukaryotes, the regulation could be exerted at

(i) transcriptional level (formation of primary transcript),
(ii) processing level (regulation of splicing),
(iii) transport of mRNA from nucleus to the cytoplasm,
(iv) translational level.

The genes in a cell are expressed to perform a particular function or a set of functions. For example, if an enzyme called beta-galactosidase is synthesised by *E. coli*, it is used to catalyse the hydrolysis of a disaccharide, lactose into galactose and glucose; the bacteria use them as a source of energy. Hence, if the bacteria do not have lactose around them to be utilised for energy source, they would no longer require the synthesis of the enzyme beta-galactosidase. Therefore, in simple terms, it is the metabolic, physiological or environmental conditions that regulate the expression of genes. The development and differentiation of embryo into adult organisms are also a result of the coordinated regulation of expression of several sets of genes.

In prokaryotes, control of the rate of transcriptional initiation is the predominant site for control of gene expression. In a transcription unit, the activity of RNA polymerase at a given promoter is in turn regulated by interaction with accessory proteins, which affect its ability to recognise start sites. These regulatory proteins can act both positively (activators) and negatively (repressors). The accessibility of promoter regions of prokaryotic DNA is in many cases regulated by the interaction of proteins with sequences termed **operators**. The operator region is adjacent to the promoter elements in most operons and in most cases the sequences of the operator bind a repressor protein. Each operon has its specific operator and specific repressor. For example, *lac* operator is present only in the *lac* operon and it interacts specifically with *lac* repressor only.

5.8.1 The *Lac* operon

The elucidation of the *lac* operon was also a result of a close association between a geneticist, Francois Jacob and a biochemist, Jacque Monod. They were the first to elucidate a transcriptionally regulated system. In *lac* operon (here *lac* refers to lactose), a polycistronic structural gene is regulated by a common promoter and regulatory genes. Such arrangement is very common in bacteria and is referred to as **operon**. To name few such examples, *lac* operon, *trp* operon, *ara* operon, *his* operon, *val* operon, etc.

The *lac* operon consists of one regulatory gene (the *i* gene – here the term *i* does not refer to inducer, rather it is derived from the word inhibitor) and three structural genes (*z*, *y*, and *a*). The *i* gene codes for the repressor of the *lac* operon. The *z* gene codes for beta-galactosidase (β-gal), which is primarily responsible for the hydrolysis of the disaccharide, lactose into its monomeric units, galactose and glucose. The *y* gene codes for permease, which increases permeability of the cell to β-galactosides. The *a* gene encodes a transacetylase. Hence, all the three gene products in *lac* operon are required for metabolism of lactose. In most other operons as well, the genes present in the operon are needed together to function in the same or related metabolic pathway (Figure 5.14).

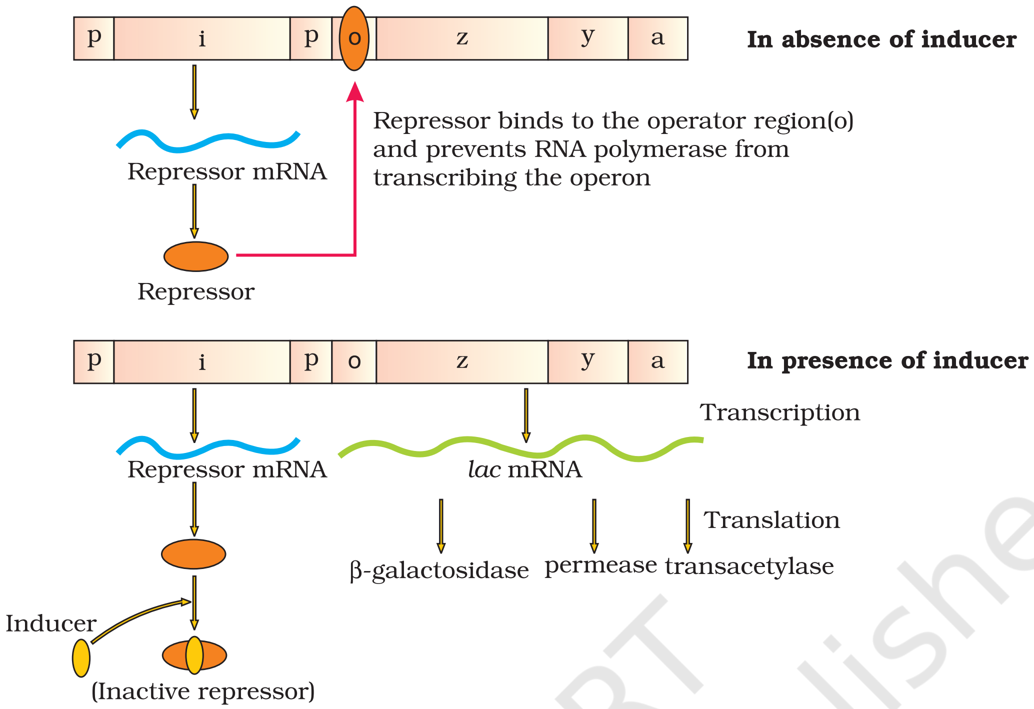
p
i
p
o
z
y
a
In absence of inducer
Repressor mRNA
Repressor binds to the operator region(o) and prevents RNA polymerase from transcribing the operon
Repressor
p
i
p
o
z
y
a
In presence of inducer
Transcription
Repressor mRNA
lac mRNA
Translation
β-galactosidase
permease
transacetylase
Inducer
(Inactive repressor)

Figure 5.14 The *lac* Operon

Lactose is the substrate for the enzyme beta-galactosidase and it regulates switching on and off of the operon. Hence, it is termed as **inducer**. In the absence of a preferred carbon source such as glucose, if lactose is provided in the growth medium of the bacteria, the lactose is transported into the cells through the action of permease (Remember, a very low level of expression of *lac* operon has to be present in the cell all the time, otherwise lactose cannot enter the cells). The lactose then induces the operon in the following manner.

The repressor of the operon is synthesised (all-the-time – constitutively) from the *i* gene. The repressor protein binds to the operator region of the operon and prevents RNA polymerase from transcribing the operon. In the presence of an inducer, such as lactose or allolactose, the repressor is inactivated by interaction with the inducer. This allows RNA polymerase access to the promoter and transcription proceeds (Figure 5.14). Essentially, regulation of *lac* operon can also be visualised as regulation of enzyme synthesis by its substrate.

Remember, glucose or galactose cannot act as inducers for lac operon. Can you think for how long the lac operon would be expressed in the presence of lactose?

Regulation of *lac* operon by repressor is referred to as **negative regulation**. *Lac* operon is under control of positive regulation as well, but it is beyond the scope of discussion at this level.

5.9 HUMAN GENOME PROJECT

In the preceding sections you have learnt that it is the sequence of bases in DNA that determines the genetic information of a given organism. In other words, genetic make-up of an organism or an individual lies in the DNA sequences. If two individuals differ, then their DNA sequences should also be different, at least at some places. These assumptions led to the quest of finding out the complete DNA sequence of human genome. With the establishment of genetic engineering techniques where it was possible to isolate and clone any piece of DNA and availability of simple and fast techniques for determining DNA sequences, a very ambitious project of sequencing human genome was launched in the year 1990.

Human Genome Project (HGP) was called a mega project. You can imagine the magnitude and the requirements for the project if we simply define the aims of the project as follows:

Human genome is said to have approximately 3 x 10^9 bp, and if the cost of sequencing required is US $ 3 per bp (the estimated cost in the beginning), the total estimated cost of the project would be approximately 9 billion US dollars. Further, if the obtained sequences were to be stored in typed form in books, and if each page of the book contained 1000 letters and each book contained 1000 pages, then 3300 such books would be required to store the information of DNA sequence from a single human cell. The enormous amount of data expected to be generated also necessitated the use of high speed computational devices for data storage and retrieval, and analysis. HGP was closely associated with the rapid development of a new area in biology called **Bioinformatics.**

Goals of HGP

Some of the important goals of HGP were as follows:

(i) Identify all the approximately 20,000-25,000 genes in human DNA;
(ii) Determine the sequences of the 3 billion chemical base pairs that make up human DNA;
(iii) Store this information in databases;
(iv) Improve tools for data analysis;
(v) Transfer related technologies to other sectors, such as industries;
(vi) Address the ethical, legal, and social issues (ELSI) that may arise from the project.

The Human Genome Project was a 13-year project coordinated by the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Institute of Health. During the early years of the HGP, the Wellcome Trust (U.K.) became a major partner; additional contributions came from Japan, France, Germany, China and others. The project was completed in 2003. Knowledge about the effects of DNA variations among individuals can lead to revolutionary new ways to diagnose, treat and someday prevent the thousands of disorders that affect human beings. Besides providing clues to understanding human biology, learning about non-human organisms DNA sequences can lead to an understanding of their natural capabilities that can be applied toward solving challenges in health care, agriculture, energy production, environmental remediation. Many non-human model organisms, such as bacteria, yeast, *Caenorhabditis elegans* (a free living non-pathogenic nematode), *Drosophila* (the fruit fly), plants (rice and *Arabidopsis*), etc., have also been sequenced.

Methodologies : The methods involved two major approaches. One approach focused on identifying all the genes that are expressed as RNA (referred to as **Expressed Sequence Tags** (ESTs). The other took the blind approach of simply sequencing the whole set of genome that contained all the coding and non-coding sequence, and later assigning different regions in the sequence with functions (a term referred to as **Sequence Annotation**). For sequencing, the total DNA from a cell is isolated and converted into random fragments of relatively smaller sizes (recall DNA is a very long polymer, and there are technical limitations in sequencing very long pieces of DNA) and cloned in suitable host using specialised vectors. The cloning resulted into amplification of each piece of DNA fragment so that it subsequently could be sequenced with ease. The commonly used hosts were bacteria and yeast, and the vectors were called as **BAC** (bacterial artificial chromosomes), and **YAC** (yeast artificial chromosomes).

The fragments were sequenced using automated DNA sequencers that worked on the principle of a method developed by Frederick Sanger. (Remember, Sanger is also credited for developing method for determination of amino acid sequences in proteins). These sequences were then arranged based on some overlapping regions present in them. This required generation of overlapping fragments for sequencing. Alignment of these sequences was humanly not possible. Therefore, specialised computer based programs were developed (Figure 5.15). These sequences were subsequently annotated and were assigned to each chromosome. The sequence of chromosome 1 was completed only in May 2006 (this was the last of the 24 human chromosomes – 22 autosomes and X and Y – to be

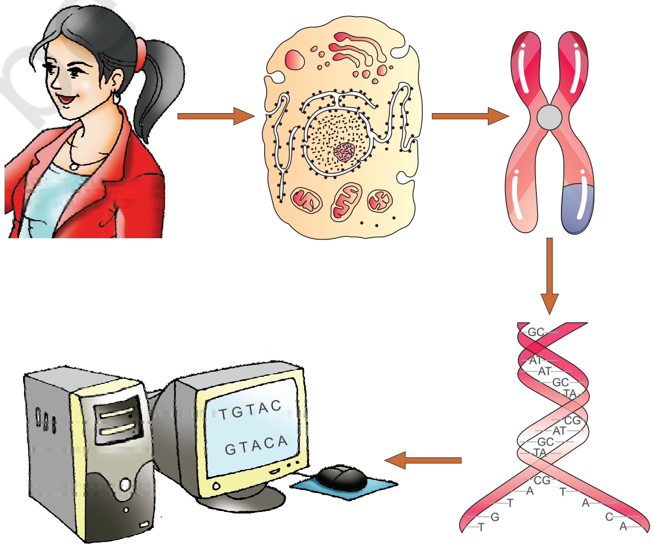

Figure 5.15 A representative diagram of human genome project

sequenced). Another challenging task was assigning the genetic and physical maps on the genome. This was generated using information on polymorphism of restriction endonuclease recognition sites, and some repetitive DNA sequences known as microsatellites (one of the applications of polymorphism in repetitive DNA sequences shall be explained in next section of DNA fingerprinting).

5.9.1 Salient Features of Human Genome

Some of the salient observations drawn from human genome project are as follows:

(i) The human genome contains 3164.7 million bp.

(ii) The average gene consists of 3000 bases, but sizes vary greatly, with the largest known human gene being dystrophin at 2.4 million bases.

(iii) The total number of genes is estimated at 30,000–much lower than previous estimates of 80,000 to 1,40,000 genes. Almost all (99.9 per cent) nucleotide bases are exactly the same in all humans.

(iv) The functions are unknown for over 50 per cent of the discovered genes.

(v) Less than 2 per cent of the genome codes for proteins.

(vi) Repeated sequences make up very large portion of the human genome.

(vii) Repetitive sequences are stretches of DNA sequences that are repeated many times, sometimes hundred to thousand times. They are thought to have no direct coding functions, but they shed light on chromosome structure, dynamics and evolution.

(viii) Chromosome 1 has most genes (2968), and the Y has the fewest (231).

(ix) Scientists have identified about 1.4 million locations where single-base DNA differences (**SNPs – single nucleotide polymorphism**, pronounced as 'snips') occur in humans. This information promises to revolutionise the processes of finding chromosomal locations for disease-associated sequences and tracing human history.

5.9.2 Applications and Future Challenges

Deriving meaningful knowledge from the DNA sequences will define research through the coming decades leading to our understanding of biological systems. This enormous task will require the expertise and creativity of tens of thousands of scientists from varied disciplines in both the public and private sectors worldwide. One of the greatest impacts of having the HG sequence may well be enabling a radically new approach to biological research. In the past, researchers studied one or a few genes at a time. With whole-genome sequences and new high-throughput technologies, we can approach questions systematically and on a much broader scale. They can study all the genes in a genome, for example, all the transcripts in a particular tissue or organ or tumor, or how tens of thousands of genes and proteins work together in interconnected networks to orchestrate the chemistry of life.

5.10 DNA FINGERPRINTING

As stated in the preceding section, 99.9 per cent of base sequence among humans is the same. *Assuming human genome as* 3×10^9 *bp, in how many base sequences would there be differences?* It is these differences in sequence of DNA which make every individual unique in their phenotypic appearance. If one aims to find out genetic differences between two individuals or among individuals of a population, sequencing the DNA every time would be a daunting and expensive task. Imagine trying to compare two sets of 3×10^6 base pairs. DNA fingerprinting is a very quick way to compare the DNA sequences of any two individuals.

DNA fingerprinting involves identifying differences in some specific regions in DNA sequence called as **repetitive DNA**, because in these sequences, a small stretch of DNA is repeated many times. These repetitive DNA are separated from bulk genomic DNA as different peaks during density gradient centrifugation. The bulk DNA forms a major peak and the other small peaks are referred to as **satellite DNA**. Depending on base composition (A : T rich or G:C rich), length of segment, and number of repetitive units, the satellite DNA is classified into many categories, such as micro-satellites, mini-satellites etc. These sequences normally do not code for any proteins, but they form a large portion of human genome. These sequence show high degree of polymorphism and form the basis of DNA fingerprinting. Since DNA from every tissue (such as blood, hair-follicle, skin, bone, saliva, sperm etc.), from an individual show the same degree of polymorphism, they become very useful identification tool in forensic applications. Further, as the polymorphisms are inheritable from parents to children, DNA fingerprinting is the basis of paternity testing, in case of disputes.

As polymorphism in DNA sequence is the basis of genetic mapping of human genome as well as of DNA fingerprinting, it is essential that we understand what DNA polymorphism means in simple terms. **Polymorphism** (variation at genetic level) arises due to mutations. (Recall different kind of mutations and their effects that you have already studied in Chapter 4, and in the preceding sections in this chapter.) New mutations may arise in an individual either in somatic cells or in the germ cells (cells that generate gametes in sexually reproducing organisms). If a germ cell mutation does not seriously impair individual's ability to have offspring who can transmit the mutation, it can spread to the other members of population (through sexual reproduction). Allelic (again recall the definition of alleles from Chapter 4) sequence variation has traditionally been described as a DNA polymorphism if more than one variant (allele) at a locus occurs in human population with a frequency greater than 0.01. In simple terms, if an **inheritable mutation** is observed in a population at high frequency, it is referred to as **DNA polymorphism**. The probability of such variation to be observed in non-coding DNA sequence would be higher as mutations in these sequences may not have any immediate effect/impact in an individual's reproductive ability. These mutations keep on accumulating generation after generation, and form one of the basis of variability/polymorphism. There is a variety of different types of polymorphisms ranging from single nucleotide change to very large scale changes. For evolution and speciation, such polymorphisms play very important role, and you will study these in details at higher classes.

The technique of DNA Fingerprinting was initially developed by Alec Jeffreys. He used a satellite DNA as probe that shows very high degree of polymorphism. It was called as **Variable Number of Tandem Repeats** (VNTR). The technique, as used earlier, involved Southern blot hybridisation using radiolabelled VNTR as a probe. It included

(i) isolation of DNA,

(ii) digestion of DNA by restriction endonucleases,

(iii) separation of DNA fragments by electrophoresis,

(iv) transferring (blotting) of separated DNA fragments to synthetic membranes, such as nitrocellulose or nylon,

(v) hybridisation using labelled VNTR probe, and

(vi) detection of hybridised DNA fragments by autoradiography. A schematic representation of DNA fingerprinting is shown in Figure 5.16.

The VNTR belongs to a class of satellite DNA referred to as mini-satellite. A small DNA sequence is arranged tandemly in many copy numbers. The copy number varies from chromosome to chromosome in an individual. The numbers of repeat show very high degree of polymorphism. As a result the size of VNTR varies in size from 0.1 to 20 kb. Consequently, after hybridisation with VNTR probe, the autoradiogram gives many bands of differing sizes. These bands give a characteristic pattern for an individual DNA (Figure 5.16). It differs from individual to individual in a population except in the case of monozygotic (identical) twins. The sensitivity of the technique has been increased by use of polymerase chain reaction (PCR– you will study about it in Chapter 9). Consequently, DNA from a single cell is enough to perform DNA fingerprinting analysis. In addition to application in forensic science, it has much wider application, such as

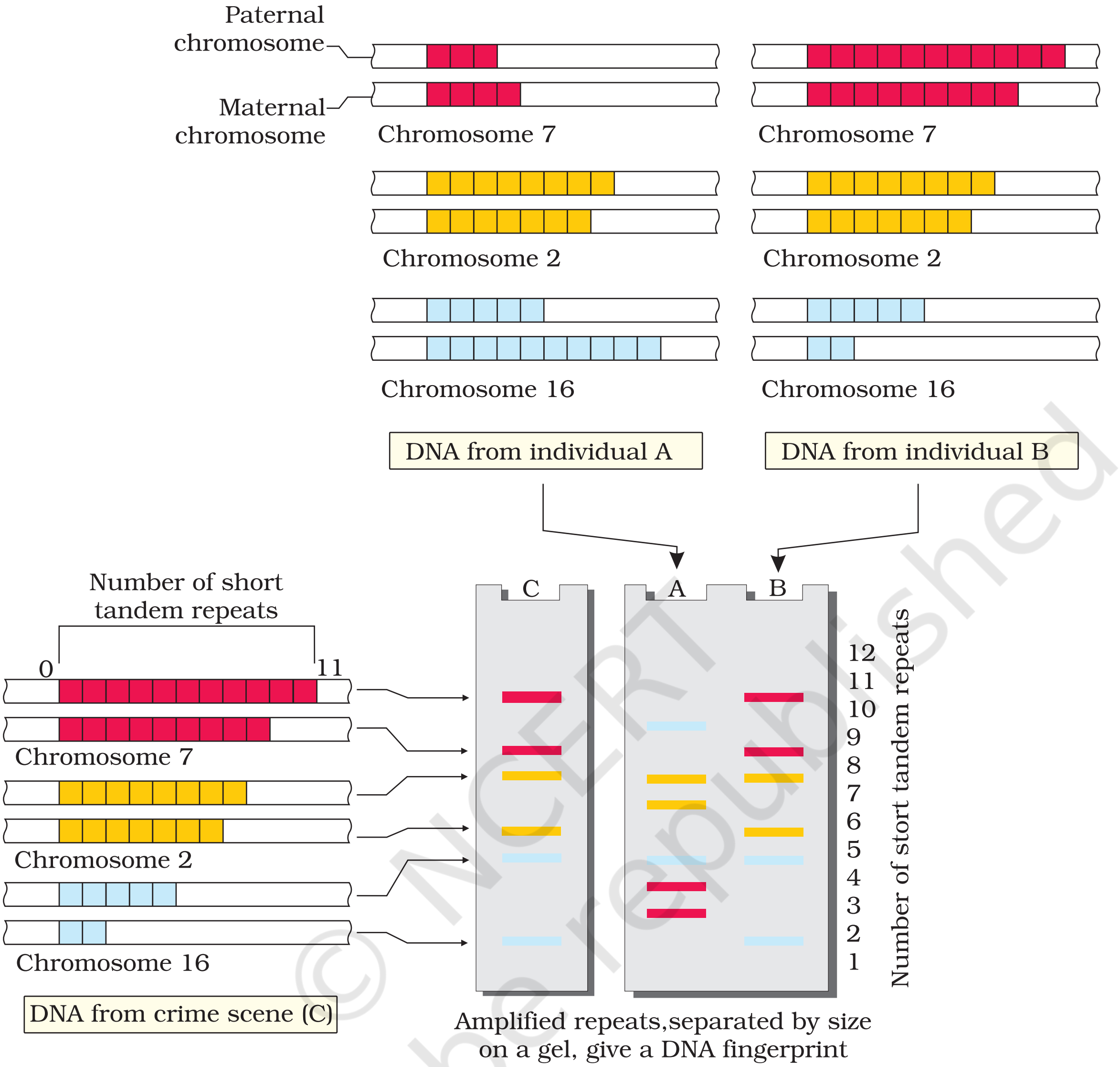
Paternal chromosome
Maternal chromosome
Chromosome 7
Chromosome 7
Chromosome 2
Chromosome 2
Chromosome 16
Chromosome 16
DNA from individual A
DNA from individual B
Number of short tandem repeats
0
11
Chromosome 7
Chromosome 2
Chromosome 16
DNA from crime scene (C)
C
A
B
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
Number of stort tandem repeats
Amplified repeats,separated by size on a gel, give a DNA fingerprint

Figure 5.16 Schematic representation of DNA fingerprinting: Few representative chromosomes have been shown to contain different copy number of VNTR. For the sake of understanding different colour schemes have been used to trace the origin of each band in the gel. The two alleles (paternal and maternal) of a chromosome also contain different copy numbers of VNTR. It is clear that the banding pattern of DNA from crime scene matches with individual B, and not with A.

in determining population and genetic diversities. Currently, many different probes are used to generate DNA fingerprints.

SUMMARY

Nucleic acids are long polymers of nucleotides. While DNA stores genetic information, RNA mostly helps in transfer and expression of information. Though DNA and RNA both function as genetic material, but DNA being chemically and structurally more stable is a better genetic material. However, RNA is the first to evolve and DNA was derived from RNA. The hallmark of the double stranded helical structure of DNA is the hydrogen bonding between the bases from opposite strands. The rule is that Adenine pairs with Thymine through two H-bonds, and Guanine with Cytosine through three H-bonds. This makes one strand complementary to the other. The DNA replicates semiconservatively, the process is guided by the complementary H-bonding. A segment of DNA that codes for RNA may in a simplistic term can be referred as gene. During transcription also, one of the strands of DNA acts a template to direct the synthesis of complementary RNA. In bacteria, the transcribed mRNA is functional, hence can directly be translated. In eukaryotes, the gene is split. The coding sequences, exons, are interrupted by non-coding sequences, introns. Introns are removed and exons are joined to produce functional RNA by splicing. The messenger RNA contains the base sequences that are read in a combination of three (to make triplet genetic code) to code for an amino acid. The genetic code is read again on the principle of complementarity by tRNA that acts as an adapter molecule. There are specific tRNAs for every amino acid. The tRNA binds to specific amino acid at one end and pairs through H-bonding with codes on mRNA through its anticodons. The site of translation (protein synthesis) is ribosomes, which bind to mRNA and provide platform for joining of amino acids. One of the rRNA acts as a catalyst for peptide bond formation, which is an example of RNA enzyme (ribozyme). Translation is a process that has evolved around RNA, indicating that life began around RNA. Since, transcription and translation are energetically very expensive processes, these have to be tightly regulated. Regulation of transcription is the primary step for regulation of gene expression. In bacteria, more than one gene is arranged together and regulated in units called as operons. *Lac* operon is the prototype operon in bacteria, which codes for genes responsible for metabolism of lactose. The operon is regulated by the amount of lactose in the medium where the bacteria are grown. Therefore, this regulation can also be viewed as regulation of enzyme synthesis by its substrate.

Human genome project was a mega project that aimed to sequence every base in human genome. This project has yielded much new information. Many new areas and avenues have opened up as a consequence of the project. DNA Fingerprinting is a technique to find out variations in individuals of a population at DNA level. It works on the principle of polymorphism in DNA sequences. It has immense applications in the field of forensic science, genetic biodiversity and evolutionary biology.

EXERCISES

1 Group the following as nitrogenous bases and nucleosides:
Adenine, Cytidine, Thymine, Guanosine, Uracil and Cytosine.

2. If a double stranded DNA has 20 per cent of cytosine, calculate the per cent of adenine in the DNA.

3. If the sequence of one strand of DNA is written as follows:

   5′-ATGCATGCATGCATGCATGCATGCATGC-3′

   Write down the sequence of complementary strand in 5′→3′ direction.

4. If the sequence of the coding strand in a transcription unit is written as follows:

   5′-ATGCATGCATGCATGCATGCATGCATGC-3′

   Write down the sequence of mRNA.

5. Which property of DNA double helix led Watson and Crick to hypothesise semi-conservative mode of DNA replication? Explain.

6. Depending upon the chemical nature of the template (DNA or RNA) and the nature of nucleic acids synthesised from it (DNA or RNA), list the types of nucleic acid polymerases.

7. How did Hershey and Chase differentiate between DNA and protein in their experiment while proving that DNA is the genetic material?

8. Differentiate between the followings:
   (a) Repetitive DNA and Satellite DNA
   (b) mRNA and tRNA
   (c) Template strand and Coding strand

9. List two essential roles of ribosome during translation.

10. In the medium where *E. coli* was growing, lactose was added, which induced the *lac* operon. Then, why does lac operon shut down some time after addition of lactose in the medium?

11. Explain (in one or two lines) the function of the followings:
    (a) Promoter
    (b) tRNA
    (c) Exons

12. Why is the Human Genome project called a mega project?

13. What is DNA fingerprinting? Mention its application.

14. Briefly describe the following:
    (a) Transcription
    (b) Polymorphism
    (c) Translation
    (d) Bioinformatics

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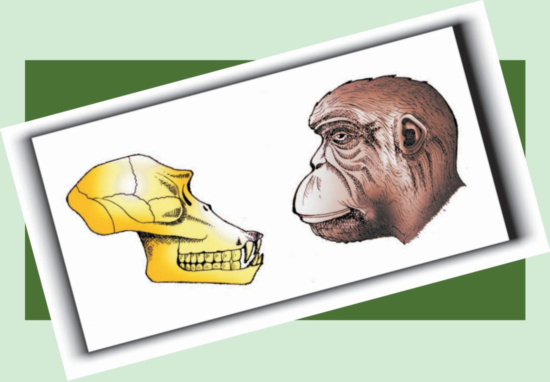
CHAPTER 6

EVOLUTION



6.1 *Origin of Life*

6.2 *Evolution of Life Forms - A Theory*

6.3 *What are the Evidences for Evolution?*

6.4 *What is Adaptive Radiation?*

6.5 *Biological Evolution*

6.6 *Mechanism of Evolution*

6.7 *Hardy - Weinberg Principle*

6.8 *A Brief Account of Evolution*

6.9 *Origin and Evolution of Man*

Evolutionary Biology is the study of history of life forms on earth. What exactly is evolution? To understand the changes in flora and fauna that have occurred over millions of years on earth, we must have an understanding of the context of origin of life, i.e., evolution of earth, of stars and indeed of the universe itself. What follows is the longest of all the construed and conjectured stories. This is the story of origin of life and evolution of life forms or biodiversity on planet earth in the context of evolution of earth and against the background of evolution of universe itself.

6.1 ORIGIN OF LIFE

When we look at stars on a clear night sky we are, in a way, looking back in time. Stellar distances are measured in light years. What we see today is an object whose emitted light started its journey millions of year back and from trillions of kilometres away and reaching our eyes now. However, when we see objects in our immediate surroundings we see them instantly and hence in the present time. Therefore, when we see stars we apparently are peeping into the past.

The origin of life is considered a unique event in the history of universe. The universe is vast. Relatively speaking the earth itself is almost only a speck. The universe is very old – almost 13.8 billion years old. Huge clusters of galaxies comprise the universe. Galaxies contain stars and clouds of gas and dust. Considering the size of universe, earth is indeed a speck. The **Big Bang** theory attempts to explain to us the origin of universe. It talks of a singular huge explosion unimaginable in physical terms. The universe expanded and hence, the temperature came down. Hydrogen and Helium formed sometime later. The gases condensed under gravitation and formed the galaxies of the present day universe. In the solar system of the milky way galaxy, earth was supposed to have been formed about 4.5 billion years back. There was no atmosphere on early earth. Water vapour, methane, carbondioxide and ammonia released from molten mass covered the surface. The UV rays from the sun brokeup water into Hydrogen and Oxygen and the lighter H_2 escaped. Oxygen combined with ammonia and methane to form water, CO_2 and others. The ozone layer was formed. As it cooled, the water vapor fell as rain, to fill all the depressions and form oceans. Life appeared 500 million years after the formation of earth, i.e., almost four billion years back.

Did life come from outerspace? Some scientists believe that it came from outside. Early Greek thinkers thought units of life called **spores** were transferred to different planets including earth. 'Panspermia' is still a favourite idea for some astronomers. For a long time it was also believed that life came out of decaying and rotting matter like straw, mud, etc. This was the theory of spontaneous generation. Louis Pasteur by careful experimentation demonstrated that life comes only from pre-existing life. He showed that in pre-sterilised flasks, life did not come from killed yeast while in another flask open to air, new living organisms arose from 'killed yeast'. Spontaneous generation theory was dismissed once and for all. However, this did not answer how the first life form came on earth.

Oparin of Russia and Haldane of England proposed that the first form of life could have come from pre-existing non-living organic molecules (e.g. RNA, protein, etc.) and that formation of life was preceded by chemical evolution, i.e., formation of diverse organic molecules from inorganic constituents. The conditions on earth were – high temperature, volcanic storms, reducing atmosphere containing CH_4, NH_3, etc. In 1953, S.L. Miller, an American scientist created similar conditions in a laboratory scale (Figure 6.1). He created electric discharge in a closed flask containing CH_4, H_2, NH_3 and water vapour at 800^0C. He observed formation of amino acids. In similar experiments others observed, formation of sugars, nitrogen bases, pigment and fats. Analysis of meteorite content also revealed similar compounds indicating that similar processes are occurring elsewhere in space. With this limited evidence, the first part of the conjectured story, i.e., chemical evolution was more or less accepted.

We have no idea about how the first self replicating metabolic capsule of life arose. The first non-cellular forms of life could have originated 3 billion years back. They would have been giant molecules (RNA, Protein,

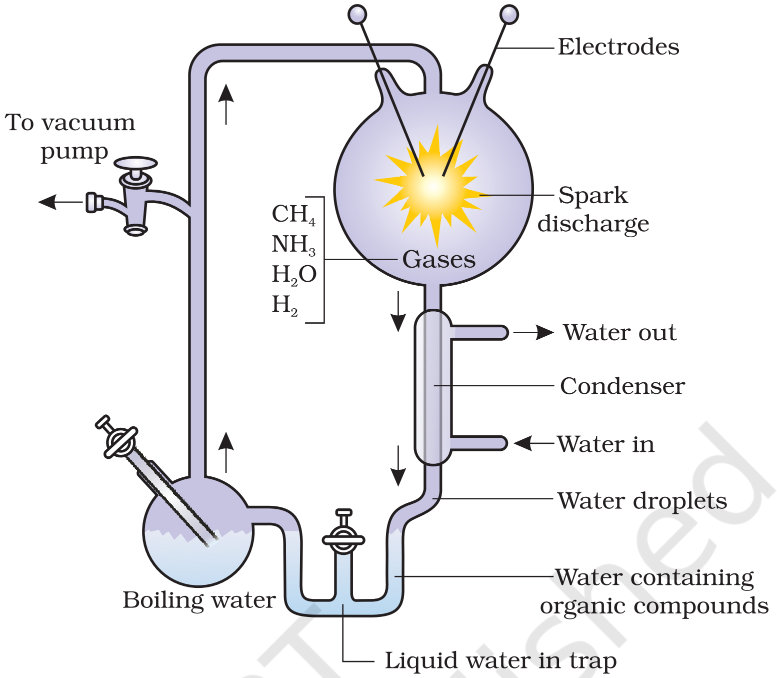


Figure 6.1 Diagrammatic representation of Miller's experiment

Polysaccharides, etc.). These capsules reproduced their molecules perhaps. The first cellular form of life did not possibly originate till about 2000 million years ago. These were probably single-cells. All life forms were in water environment only. This version of a biogenesis, i.e., the first form of life arose slowly through evolutionary forces from non-living molecules is accepted by majority. However, once formed, how the first cellular forms of life could have evolved into the complex biodiversity of today is the fascinating story that will be discussed below.

6.2 EVOLUTION OF LIFE FORMS – A THEORY

Conventional religious literature tells us about the theory of special creation. This theory has three connotations. One, that all living organisms (species or types) that we see today were created as such. Two, that the diversity was always the same since creation and will be the same in future also. Three, that earth is about 4000 years old. All these ideas were strongly challenged during the nineteenth century. Based on observations made during a sea voyage in a sail ship called H.M.S. Beagle round the world, Charles Darwin concluded that existing living forms share similarities to varying degrees not only among themselves but also with life forms that existed millions of years ago. Many such life forms do not exist any more. There had been extinctions of different life forms in the years gone by just as new forms of life arose at different periods of history of earth. There has been gradual evolution of life forms. Any population has built in variation in characteristics. Those characteristics which enable some to survive better in natural conditions (climate, food, physical factors, etc.) would outbreed others that are less-endowed to survive under such natural conditions. Another word used is fitness of the individual or population. The fitness, according to Darwin, refers ultimately and only to reproductive fitness. Hence, those who are better fit in an environment, leave more progeny than others. These, therefore, will survive more and hence are selected by nature. He called it natural selection and implied it as a mechanism of evolution. Let us also remember that Alfred Wallace, a naturalist who worked in Malay Archipelago had also come to similar conclusions around the same time. In due course of time, apparently new types of organisms are recognisable. All the existing life forms share similarities and share common ancestors. However, these ancestors were present at different periods in the history of earth (epochs, periods and eras). The geological history of earth closely correlates with the biological history of earth. A common permissible conclusion is that earth is very old, not thousand of years as was thought earlier but billions of years old.

6.3 WHAT ARE THE EVIDENCES FOR EVOLUTION?

Evidence that evolution of life forms has indeed taken place on earth has come from many quarters. Fossils are remains of hard parts of life-forms found in rocks. Rocks form sediments and a cross-section of earth's crust indicates the arrangement of sediments one over the other during the long history of earth. Different-aged rock sediments contain fossils of different life-forms who probably died during the formation of the particular sediment. Some of them appear similar to modern organisms (Figure 6.2). They represent extinct organisms (e.g., Dinosaurs). A study of fossils in different sedimentary layers indicates the geological period in which they existed. The study showed that life-forms varied over time and certain life forms are restricted to certain geological time-spans. Hence, new forms of life have arisen at different times in the history of earth. All this is called paleontological evidence. *Do you remember how the ages of the fossils are calculated? Do you recollect the method of radioactive-dating and the principles behind the procedure?*

Embryological support for evolution was also proposed by Ernst Heckel based upon the observation of certain features during embryonic stage common to all vertebrates that are absent in adult. For example, the embryos of all vertebrates including human develop a row of vestigial gill slit just behind the head but it is a functional organ only in fish and not found in any other adult vertebrates. However, this proposal was disapproved on careful study performed by Karl Ernst von Baer. He noted that embryos never pass through the adult stages of other animals.

Comparative anatomy and morphology shows similarities and differences among organisms of today and those that existed years ago.

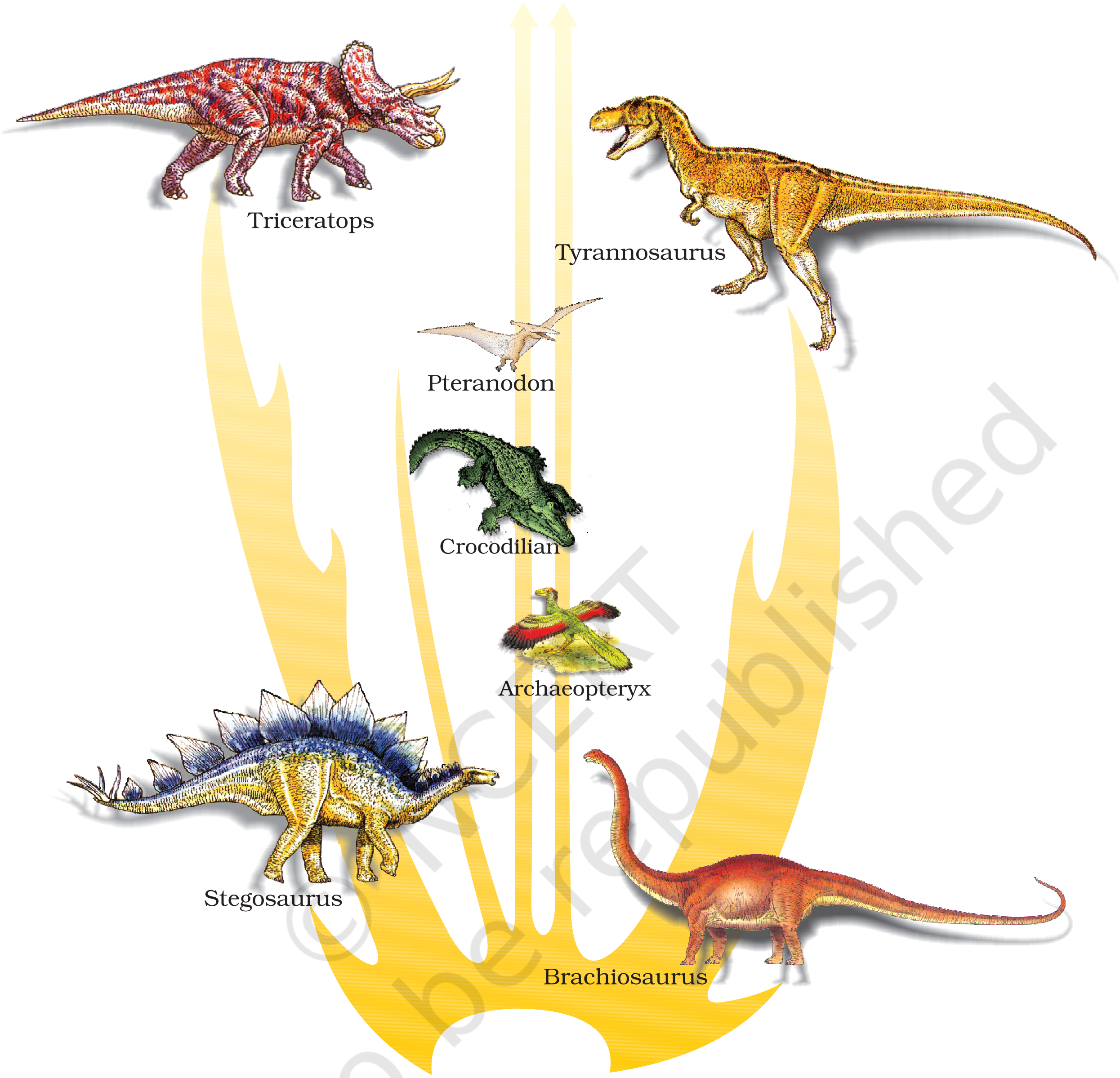
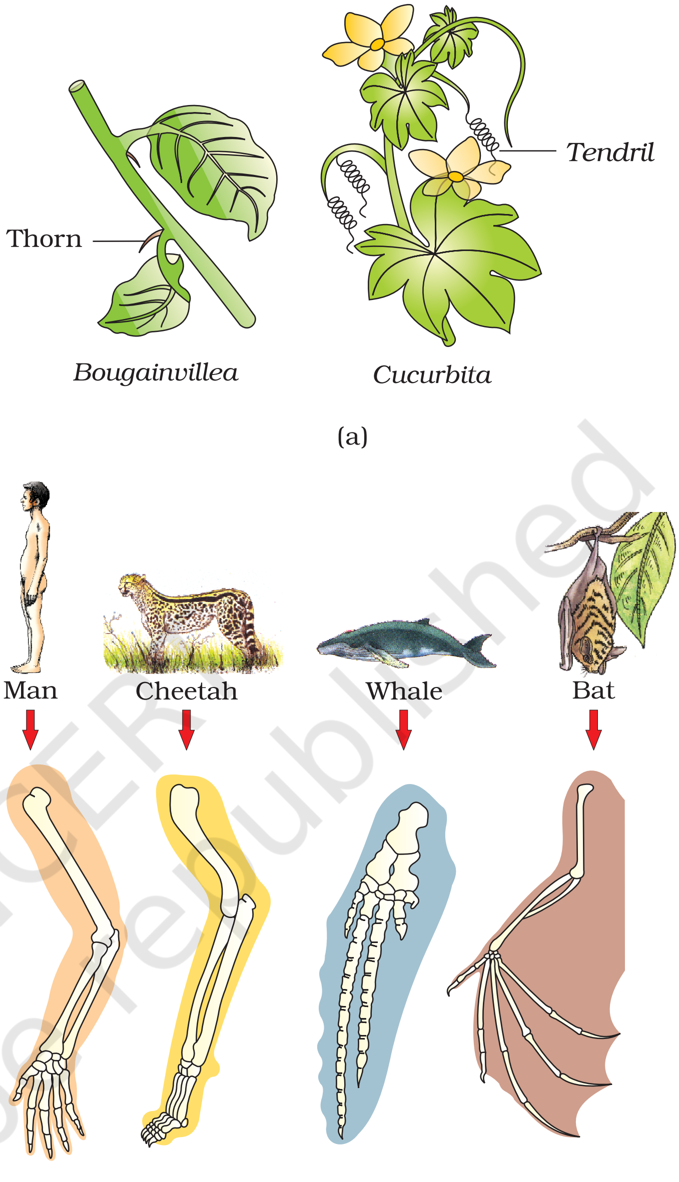

Triceratops
Tyrannosaurus
Pteranodon
Crocodilian
Archaeopteryx
Stegosaurus
Brachiosaurus

Figure 6.2 A family tree of dinosaurs and their living modern day counterpart organisms like crocodiles and birds

Such similarities can be interpreted to understand whether common ancestors were shared or not. For example whales, bats, Cheetah and human (all mammals) share similarities in the pattern of bones of forelimbs (Figure 6.3b). Though these forelimbs perform different functions in these animals, they have similar anatomical structure – all of them have humerus, radius, ulna, carpals, metacarpals and phalanges in their forelimbs. Hence, in these animals, the same structure developed along different directions due to adaptations to different needs. This is **divergent evolution** and these structures are **homologous**. Homology indicates common ancestry. Other examples are vertebrate hearts or brains. In plants also, the thorn and tendrils of *Bougainvillea* and *Cucurbita* represent homology (Figure 6.3a). Homology is based on divergent evolution whereas analogy refers to a situation exactly opposite. Wings of butterfly and of birds look alike. They are not anatomically similar structures though they perform similar functions. Hence, analogous structures are a result of **convergent evolution** - different structures evolving for the same function and hence having similarity. Other examples of analogy are the eye of the octopus and of mammals or the flippers of Penguins and Dolphins. One can say that it is the similar habitat that has resulted in selection of similar adaptive features in different groups of organisms but toward the same function: Sweet potato (root modification) and potato (stem modification) is another example for analogy.



(a)

(b)

Figure 6.3 Example of homologous organs in (a) Plants and (b) Animals

In the same line of argument, similarities in proteins and genes performing a given function among diverse organisms give clues to common ancestry. These biochemical similarities point to the same shared ancestry as structural similarities among diverse organisms.

Man has bred selected plants and animals for agriculture, horticulture, sport or security. Man has domesticated many wild animals and crops. This intensive breeding programme has created breeds that differ from other breeds (e.g., dogs) but still are of the same group. It is argued that if within hundreds of years, man could create new breeds, could not nature have done the same over millions of years?

Another interesting observation supporting evolution by natural selection comes from England. In a collection of moths made in 1850s, i.e., before industrialisation set in, it was observed that there were more white-winged moths on trees than dark-winged or melanised moths. However, in the collection carried out from the same area, but after industrialisation, i.e., in 1920, there were more dark-winged moths in the same area, i.e., the proportion was reversed.

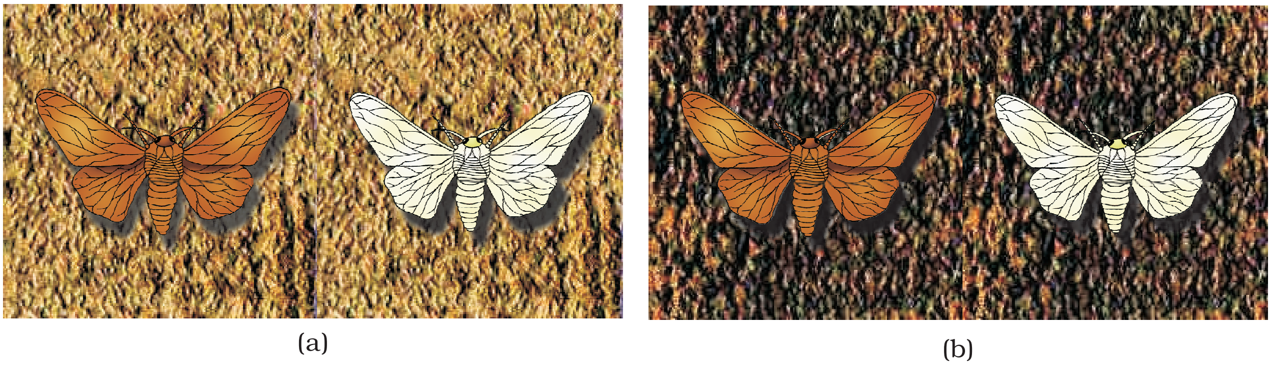


Figure 6.4 Figure showing white - winged moth and dark - winged moth (melanised) on a tree trunk (a) In unpolluted area (b) In polluted area

The explanation put forth for this observation was that 'predators will spot a moth against a contrasting background'. During post-industrialisation period, the tree trunks became dark due to industrial smoke and soots. Under this condition the white-winged moth did not survive due to predators, dark-winged or melanised moth survived. Before industrialisation set in, thick growth of almost white-coloured lichen covered the trees - in that background the white winged moth survived but the dark-coloured moth were picked out by predators. *Do you know that lichens can be used as industrial pollution indicators?* They will not grow in areas that are polluted. Hence, moths that were able to camouflage themselves, i.e., hide in the background, survived (Figure 6.4). This understanding is supported by the fact that in areas where industrialisation did not occur e.g., in rural areas, the count of melanic moths was low. This showed that in a mixed population, those that can better-adapt, survive and increase in population size. Remember that no variant is completely wiped out.

Similarly, excess use of herbicides, pesticides, etc., has only resulted in selection of resistant varieties in a much lesser time scale. This is also true for microbes against which we employ antibiotics or drugs against eukaryotic organisms/cell. Hence, resistant organisms/cells are appearing in a time scale of months or years and not centuries. These are examples of evolution by anthropogenic action. This also tells us that evolution is not a directed process in the sense of determinism. It is a stochastic process based on chance events in nature and chance mutation in the organisms.

6.4 WHAT IS ADAPTIVE RADIATION?

During his journey Darwin went to Galapagos Islands. There he observed an amazing diversity of creatures. Of particular interest, small black birds later called Darwin's Finches amazed him. He realised that there were many

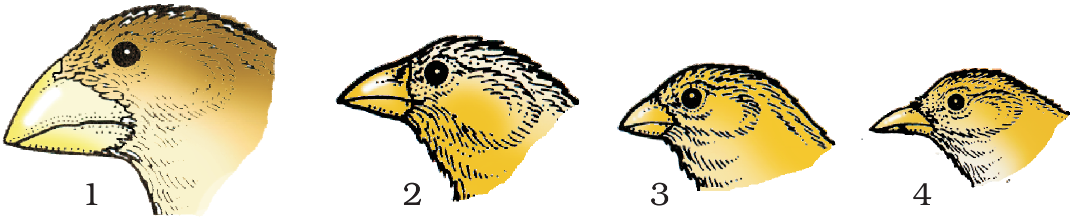


Figure 6.5 Variety of beaks of finches that Darwin found in Galapagos Island

varieties of finches in the same island. All the varieties, he conjectured, evolved on the island itself. From the original seed-eating features, many other forms with altered beaks arose, enabling them to become insectivorous and vegetarian finches (Figure 6.5). This process of evolution of different species in a given geographical area starting from a point and literally radiating to other areas of geography (habitats) is called **adaptive radiation**. Darwin's finches represent one of the best examples of this phenomenon. Another example is Australian marsupials. A number of marsupials, each different from the other (Figure 6.6) evolved from an ancestral stock, but all within the Australian island continent. When more than one adaptive radiation appeared to have occurred in an isolated geographical area (representing

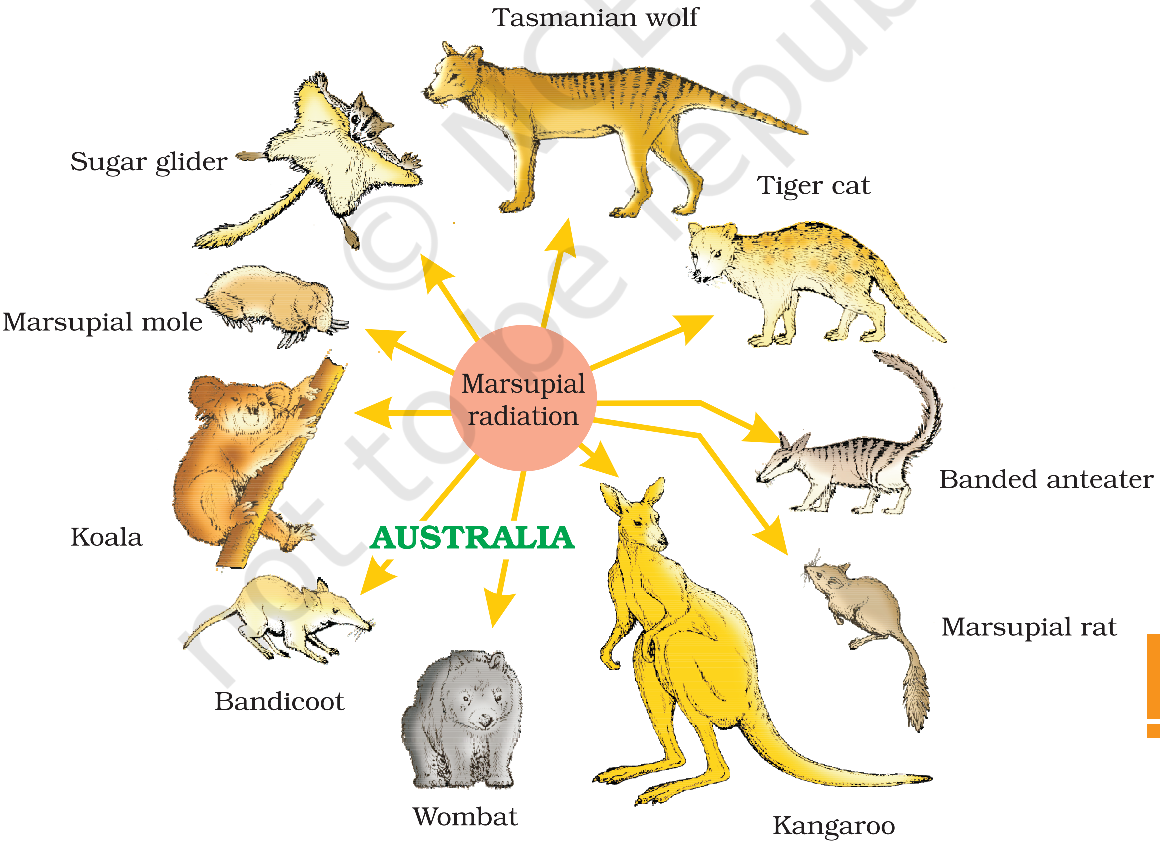

Tasmanian wolf
Sugar glider
Tiger cat
Marsupial mole
Marsupial radiation
Koala
AUSTRALIA
Banded anteater
Marsupial rat
Bandicoot
Wombat
Kangaroo

Figure 6.6 Adaptive radiation of marsupials of Australia

different habitats), one can call this convergent evolution. Placental mammals in Australia also exhibit adaptive radiation in evolving into varieties of such placental mammals each of which appears to be 'similar' to a corresponding marsupial (e.g., Placental wolf and Tasmanian wolf-marsupial). (Figure 6.7).

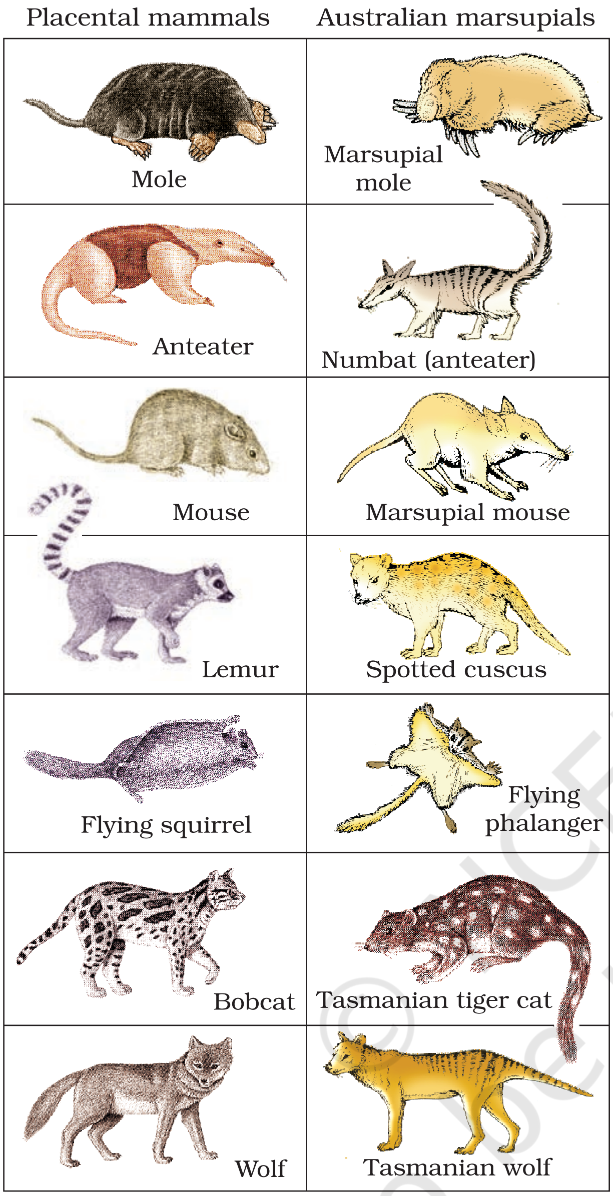


Figure 6.7 Picture showing convergent evolution of Australian Marsupials and placental mammals

6.5 Biological Evolution

Evolution by natural selection, in a true sense would have started when cellular forms of life with differences in metabolic capability originated on earth.

The essence of Darwinian theory about evolution is natural selection. The rate of appearance of new forms is linked to the life cycle or the life span. Microbes that divide fast have the ability to multiply and become millions of individuals within hours. A colony of bacteria (say A) growing on a given medium has built-in variation in terms of ability to utilise a feed component. A change in the medium composition would bring out only that part of the population (say B) that can survive under the new conditions. In due course of time this variant population outgrows the others and appears as new species. This would happen within days. For the same thing to happen in a fish or fowl would take million of years as life spans of these animals are in years. Here we say that fitness of B is better than that of A under the new conditions. Nature selects for fitness. One must remember that the so-called fitness is based on characteristics which are inherited. Hence, there must be a genetic basis for getting selected and to evolve. Another way of saying the same thing is that some organisms are better adapted to survive in an otherwise hostile environment. Adaptive ability is inherited. It has a genetic basis. Fitness is the end result of the ability to adapt and get selected by nature.

Branching descent and **natural selection** are the two key concepts of Darwinian Theory of Evolution (Figures 6.7 and 6.8).

Even before Darwin, a French naturalist Lamarck had said that evolution of life forms had occurred but driven by use and disuse of

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organs. He gave the examples of Giraffes who in an attempt to forage leaves on tall trees had to adapt by elongation of their necks. As they passed on this acquired character of elongated neck to succeeding generations, Giraffes, slowly, over the years, came to acquire long necks. Nobody believes this conjecture any more.

Is evolution a process or the result of a process? The world we see, inanimate and animate, is only the success stories of evolution. When we describe the story of this world we describe evolution as a process. On the other hand when we describe the story of life on earth, we treat evolution as a consequence of a process called natural selection. We are still not very clear whether to regard evolution and natural selection as processes or end result of unknown processes.

It is possible that the work of Thomas Malthus on populations influenced Darwin. Natural selection is based on certain observations which are factual. For example, natural resources are limited, populations are stable in size except for seasonal fluctuation, members of a population vary in characteristics (infact no two individuals are alike) even though they look superficially similar, most of variations are inherited etc. The fact that theoretically population size will grow exponentially if everybody reproduced maximally (this fact can be seen in a growing bacterial population) and the fact that population sizes in reality are limited, means that there had been competition for resources. Only some survived and grew at the cost of others that could not flourish. The novelty and brilliant insight of Darwin was this: he asserted that variations, which are heritable and which make resource utilisation better for few (adapted to habitat better) will enable only those to reproduce and leave more progeny. Hence for a period of time, over many generations, survivors will leave more progeny and there would be a change in population characteristic and hence new forms appear to arise.

6.6 MECHANISM OF EVOLUTION

What is the origin of this variation and how does speciation occur? Even though Mendel had talked of inheritable 'factors' influencing phenotype, Darwin either ignored these observations or kept silence. In the first decade of twentieth century, Hugo deVries based on his work on evening primrose brought forth the idea of mutations – large difference arising suddenly in a population. He believed that it is mutation which causes evolution and not the minor variations (heritable) that Darwin talked about. Mutations are random and directionless while Darwinian variations are small and directional. Evolution for Darwin was gradual while deVries believed mutation caused speciation and hence called it **saltation** (single step large mutation). Studies in population genetics, later, brought out some clarity.

6.7 Hardy-Weinberg Principle

In a given population one can find out the frequency of occurrence of alleles of a gene or a locus. This frequency is supposed to remain fixed and even remain the same through generations. Hardy-Weinberg principle stated it using algebraic equations.

This principle says that allele frequencies in a population are stable and is constant from generation to generation. The gene pool (total genes and their alleles in a population) remains a constant. This is called genetic equilibrium. Sum total of all the allelic frequencies is 1. Individual

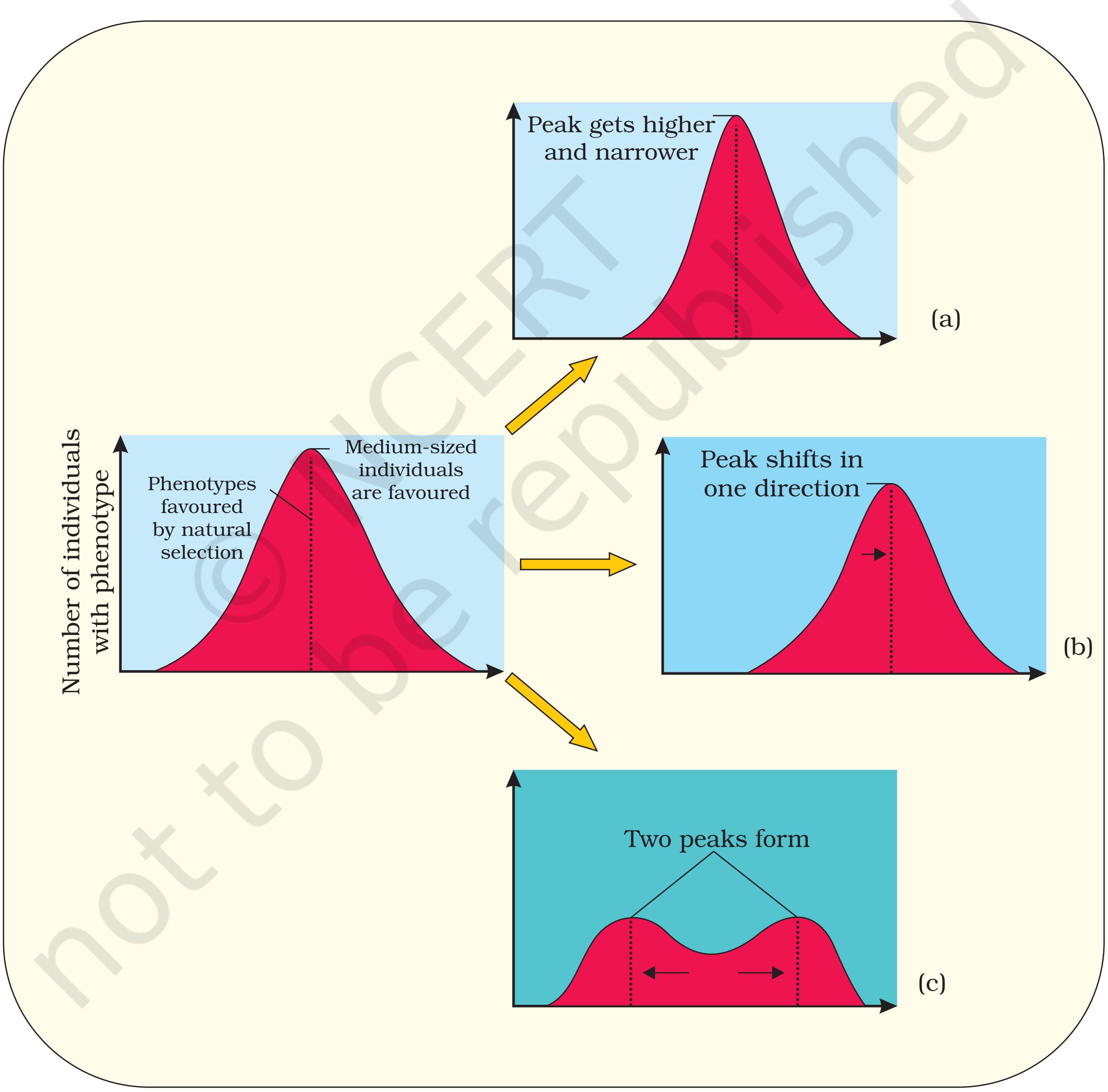
Number of individuals with phenotype
Phenotypes favoured by natural selection
Medium-sized individuals are favoured
Peak gets higher and narrower
(a)
Peak shifts in one direction
(b)
Two peaks form
(c)

Figure 6.8 Diagrammatic representation of the operation of natural selection on different traits : (a) Stabilising (b) Directional and (c) Disruptive

frequencies, for example, can be named p, q, etc. In a diploid, p and q represent the frequency of allele *A* and allele *a*. The frequency of *AA* individuals in a population is simply p^2. This is simply stated in another ways, i.e., the probability that an allele A with a frequency of p appear on both the chromosomes of a diploid individual is simply the product of the probabilities, i.e., p^2. Similarly of aa is q^2, of Aa 2pq. Hence, $p^2+2pq+q^2=1$. This is a binomial expansion of $(p+q)^2$. When frequency measured, differs from expected values, the difference (direction) indicates the extent of evolutionary change. Disturbance in genetic equilibrium, or Hardy- Weinberg equilibrium, i.e., change of frequency of alleles in a population would then be interpreted as resulting in evolution.

Five factors are known to affect Hardy-Weinberg equilibrium. These are gene migration or gene flow, genetic drift, mutation, genetic recombination and natural selection. When migration of a section of population to another place and population occurs, gene frequencies change in the original as well as in the new population. New genes/alleles are added to the new population and these are lost from the old population. There would be a gene flow if this gene migration, happens multiple times. If the same change occurs by chance, it is called genetic drift. Sometimes the change in allele frequency is so different in the new sample of population that they become a different species. The original drifted population becomes founders and the effect is called **founder effect**.

Microbial experiments show that pre-existing advantageous mutations when selected will result in observation of new phenotypes. Over few generations, this would result in Speciation. Natural selection is a process in which heritable variations enabling better survival are enabled to reproduce and leave greater number of progeny. A critical analysis makes us believe that variation due to mutation or variation due to recombination during gametogenesis, or due to gene flow or genetic drift results in changed frequency of genes and alleles in future generation. Coupled to enhance reproductive success, natural selection makes it look like different population. Natural selection can lead to stabilisation (in which more individuals acquire mean character value), directional change (more individuals acquire value other than the mean character value) or disruption (more individuals acquire peripheral character value at both ends of the distribution curve) (Figure 6.8).

6.8 A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF EVOLUTION

About 2000 million years ago (mya) the first cellular forms of life appeared on earth. The mechanism of how non-cellular aggregates of giant macromolecules could evolve into cells with membranous envelop is not known. Some of these cells had the ability to release O_2. The reaction

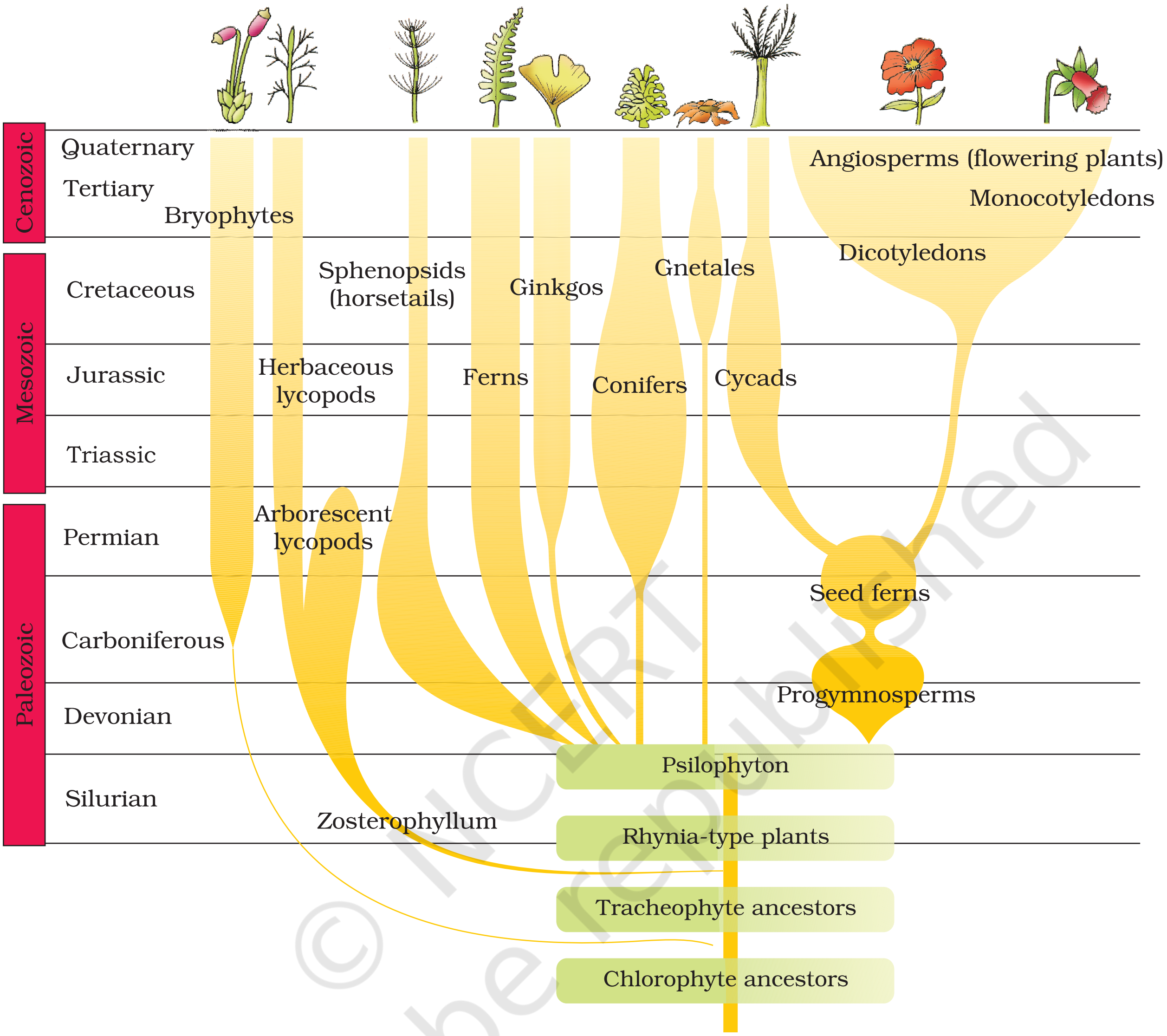
Cenozoic
Quaternary
Tertiary
Bryophytes
Angiosperms (flowering plants)
Monocotyledons
Mesozoic
Cretaceous
Sphenopsids (horsetails)
Ginkgos
Gnetales
Dicotyledons
Jurassic
Herbaceous lycopods
Ferns
Conifers
Cycads
Triassic
Paleozoic
Permian
Arborescent lycopods
Seed ferns
Carboniferous
Devonian
Progymnosperms
Silurian
Psilophyton
Zosterophyllum
Rhynia-type plants
Tracheophyte ancestors
Chlorophyte ancestors

Figure 6.9 A sketch of the evolution of plant forms through geological periods

could have been similar to the light reaction in photosynthesis where water is split with the help of solar energy captured and channelised by appropriate light harvesting pigments. Slowly single-celled organisms became multi-cellular life forms. By the time of 500 mya, invertebrates were formed and active. Jawless fish probably evolved around 350 mya. Sea weeds and few plants existed probably around 320 mya. We are told that the first organisms that invaded land were plants. They were widespread on land when animals invaded land. Fish with stout and strong fins could move on land and go back to water. This was about 350 mya. In 1938, a fish caught in South Africa happened to be a Coelacanth which was thought to be extinct. These animals called lobefins evolved into the

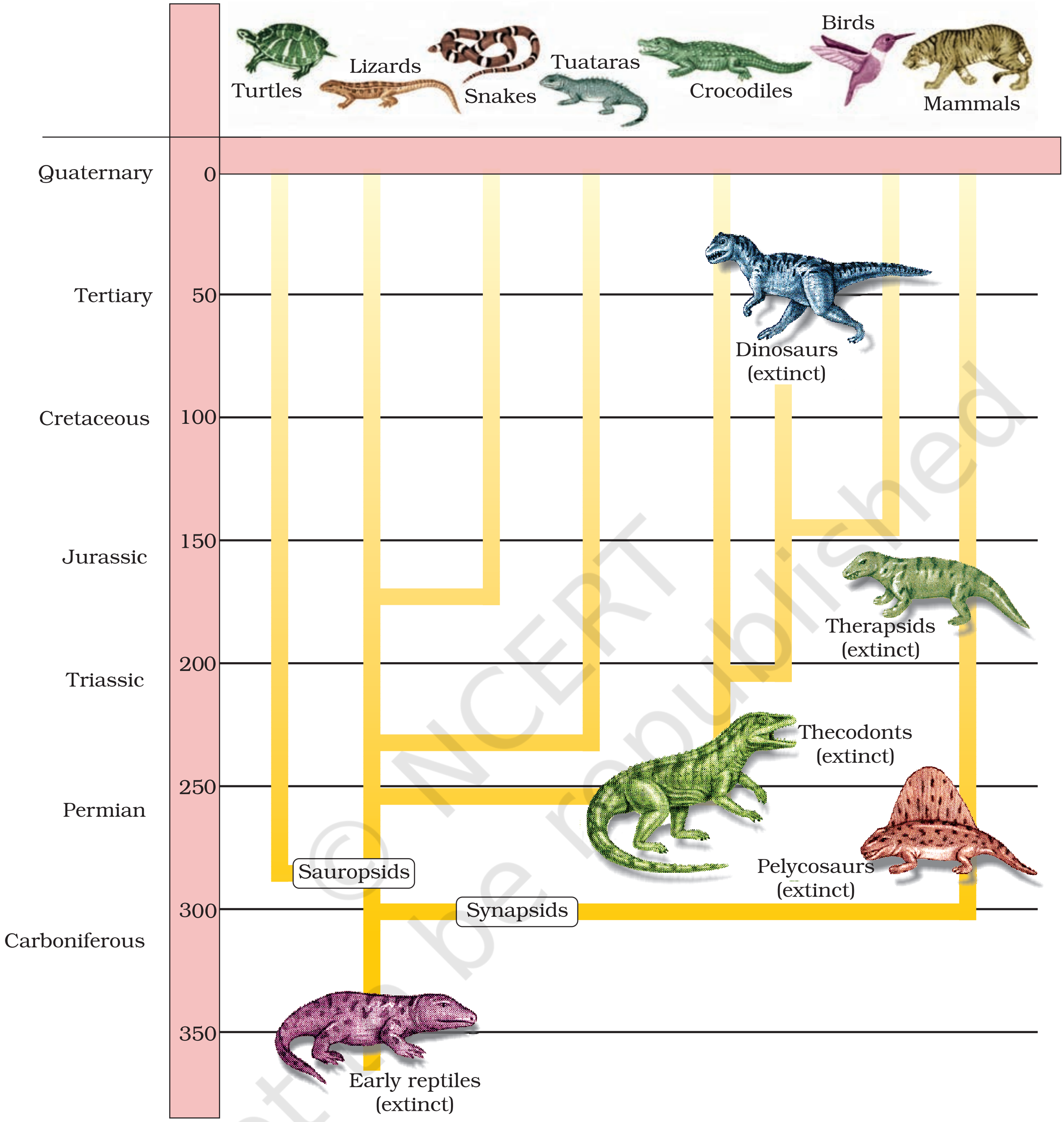
Turtles
Lizards
Snakes
Tuataras
Crocodiles
Birds
Mammals
Quaternary
Tertiary
Cretaceous
Jurassic
Triassic
Permian
Carboniferous
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
350
Dinosaurs (extinct)
Therapsids (extinct)
Thecodonts (extinct)
Pelycosaurs (extinct)
Sauropsids
Synapsids
Early reptiles (extinct)

Figure 6.10 Representative evolutionary history of vertebrates through geological periods

first amphibians that lived on both land and water. There are no specimens of these left with us. However, these were ancestors of modern day frogs and salamanders. The amphibians evolved into reptiles. They lay thick-shelled eggs which do not dry up in sun unlike those of amphibians. Again we only see their modern day descendents, the turtles, tortoises and crocodiles. In the next 200 millions years or so, reptiles of different shapes and sizes dominated on earth. Giant ferns (pteridophytes) were present but they all fell to form coal deposits slowly. Some of these land reptiles went back into water to evolve into fish like reptiles probably 200 mya (e.g. *Ichthyosaurs*). The land reptiles were, of course, the dinosaurs. The biggest of them, i.e., *Tyrannosaurus rex* was about 20 feet in height and had huge fearsome dagger like teeth. About 65 mya, the dinosaurs suddenly disappeared from the earth. We do not know the true reason. Some say climatic changes killed them. Some say most of them evolved into birds. The truth may live in between. Small sized reptiles of that era still exist today.

The first mammals were like shrews. Their fossils are small sized. Mammals were viviparous and protected their unborn young inside the mother's body. Mammals were more intelligent in sensing and avoiding danger at least. When reptiles came down mammals took over this earth. There were in South America mammals resembling horse, hippopotamus, bear, rabbit, etc. Due to continental drift, when South America joined North America, these animals were overridden by North American fauna. Due to the same continental drift pouched mammals of Australia survived because of lack of competition from any other mammal.

Lest we forget, some mammals live wholly in water. Whales, dolphins, seals and sea cows are some examples. Evolution of horse, elephant, dog, etc., are special stories of evolution. You will learn about these in higher classes. The most successful story is the evolution of man with language skills and self-consciousness.

A rough sketch of the evolution of life forms, their times on a geological scale are indicated in (Figures 6.9 and 6.10).

6.9 ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF MAN

About 15 mya, primates called *Dryopithecus* and *Ramapithecus* were existing. They were hairy and walked like gorillas and chimpanzees. *Ramapithecus* was more man-like while *Dryopithecus* was more ape-like. Few fossils of man-like bones have been discovered in Ethiopia and Tanzania (Figure 6.11). These revealed hominid features leading to the belief that about 3-4 mya, man-like primates walked in eastern Africa. They were probably not taller than 4 feet but walked up right. Two mya, *Australopithecines* probably lived in East African grasslands. Evidence shows they hunted with stone weapons but essentially ate fruit. Some of the bones among the bones discovered were different. This creature was called the first human-like being the hominid and was called *Homo habilis.* The brain capacities were between 650-800cc. They probably did not eat meat. Fossils discovered in Java in 1891 revealed the next stage, i.e., *Homo erectus* about 1.5 mya. *Homo erectus* had a large brain around 900cc.

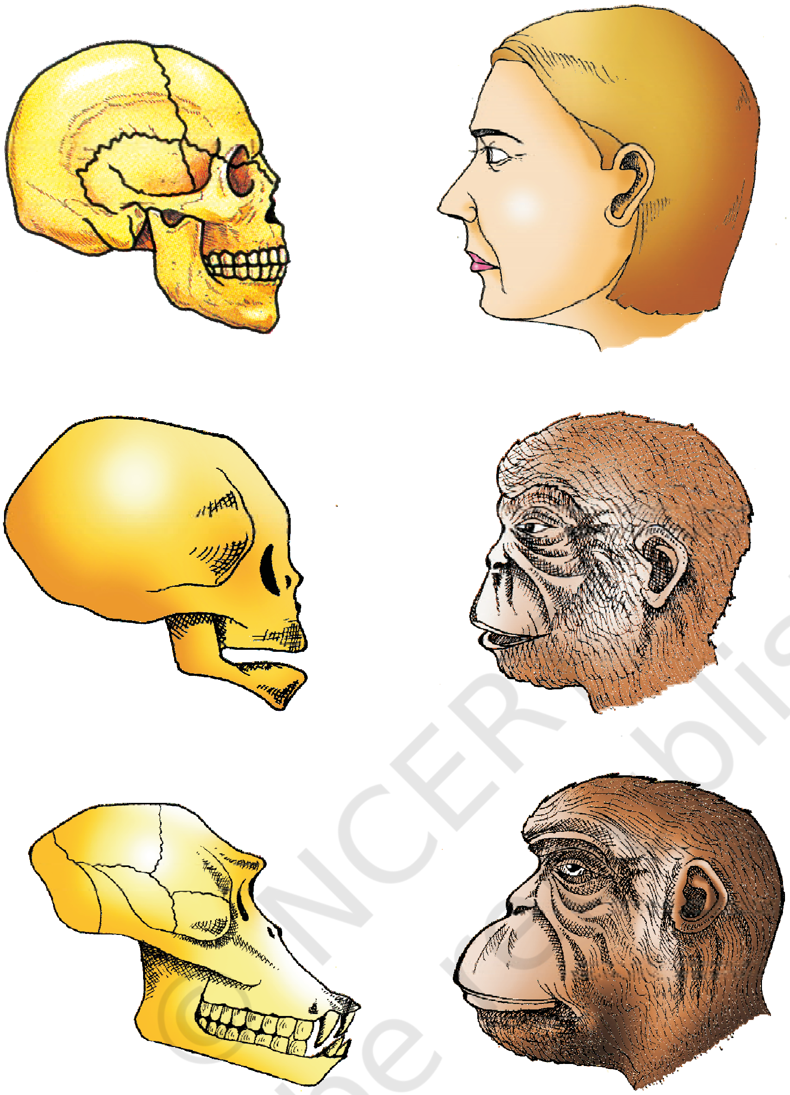

Figure 6.11 A comparison of the skulls of adult modern human being, baby chimpanzee and adult chimpanzee. The skull of baby chimpanzee is more like adult human skull than adult chimpanzee skull

Homo erectus probably ate meat. The Neanderthal man with a brain size of 1400cc lived in near east and central Asia between 1,00,000-40,000 years back. They used hides to protect their body and buried their dead. *Homo sapiens* arose in Africa and moved across continents and developed into distinct races. During ice age between 75,000-10,000 years ago modern *Homo sapiens* arose. Pre-historic cave art developed about 18,000 years ago. One such cave paintings by Pre-historic humans can be seen at Bhimbetka rock shelter in Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh. Agriculture came around 10,000 years back and human settlements started. The rest of what happened is part of human history of growth and decline of civilisations.

SUMMARY

The origin of life on earth can be understood only against the background of origin of universe especially earth. Most scientists believe chemical evolution, i.e., formation of biomolecules preceded the appearance of the first cellular forms of life. The subsequent events as to what happened to the first form of life is a conjectured story based on Darwinian ideas of organic evolution by natural selection. Diversity of life forms on earth has been changing over millions of years. It is generally believed that variations in a population result in variable fitness. Other phenomena like habitat fragmentation and genetic drift may accentuate these variations leading to appearance of new species and hence evolution. Homology is accounted for by the idea of branching descent. Study of comparative anatomy, fossils and comparative biochemistry provides evidence for evolution. Among the stories of evolution of individual species, the story of evolution of modern man is most interesting and appears to parallel evolution of human brain and language.

EXERCISES

1. Explain antibiotic resistance observed in bacteria in light of Darwinian selection theory.
2. Find out from newspapers and popular science articles any new fossil discoveries or controversies about evolution.
3. Attempt giving a clear definition of the term species.
4. Try to trace the various components of human evolution (hint: brain size and function, skeletal structure, dietary preference, etc.)
5. Find out through internet and popular science articles whether animals other than man has self-consciousness.
6. List 10 modern-day animals and using the internet resources link it to a corresponding ancient fossil. Name both.
7. Practise drawing various animals and plants.
8. Describe one example of adaptive radiation.
9. Can we call human evolution as adaptive radiation?
10. Using various resources such as your school Library or the internet and discussions with your teacher, trace the evolutionary stages of any one animal, say horse.

UNIT VIII

BIOLOGY IN HUMAN WELFARE

Chapter 7
Human Health and Disease

Chapter 8
Microbes in Human Welfare

Biology is the youngest of the formalised disciplines of natural science. Progress in physics and chemistry proceeded much faster than in Biology. Applications of physics and chemistry in our daily life also have a higher visibility than those of biology. However, twentieth century and certainly twenty-first century has demonstrated the utility of biological knowledge in furthering human welfare, be it in health sector or agriculture. The discovery of antibiotics, and synthetic plant-derived drugs, anaesthetics have changed medical practice on one hand and human health on the other hand. Life expectancy of human beings have dramatically changed over the years. Agricultural practices, food processing and diagnostics have brought socio-cultural changes in human communities. These are briefly described in the following three chapters of this unit.

M.S. SWAMINATHAN
(1925)

Born in August 1925 in Kumbakonam in Tamil Nadu, Monkambu Sambasivan Swaminathan did his graduation and post-graduation in Botany from Madras University. He worked in different capacities in large number of institutions in India and abroad and developed his expertise in genetics and plant breeding.

The School of Cytogenetics and Radiation Research established at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) enabled Swaminathan and his team to develop short-duration high-yielding varieties of rice including scented Basmati. He is also known for the development of the concept of crop cafeteria, crop scheduling and genetically improving the yield and quality.

Swaminathan initiated collaboration with Norman Borlaug, which culminated in the 'Green Revolution' through introduction of Mexican varieties of wheat in India. This was highly recognised and appreciated. He is also the initiator of 'Lab-to-Land', food security and several other environmental programmes. He has been honoured with Padma Bhushan and several other prestigious awards, medals and fellowships by institutions of excellence.

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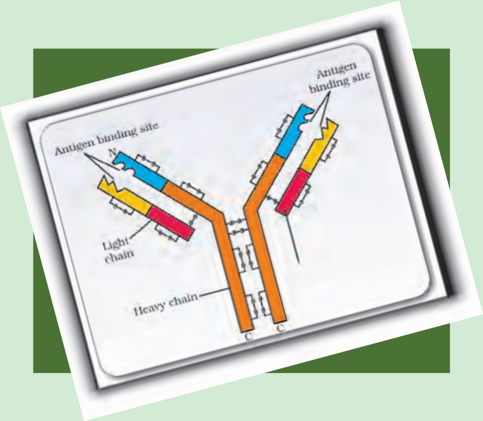


CHAPTER 7

HUMAN HEALTH AND DISEASE

7.1 Common Diseases in Humans
7.2 Immunity
7.3 AIDS
7.4 Cancer
7.5 Drugs and Alcohol Abuse

Health, for a long time, was considered as a state of body and mind where there was a balance of certain 'humors'. This is what early Greeks like Hippocrates as well as Indian Ayurveda system of medicine asserted. It was thought that persons with 'blackbile' belonged to hot personality and would have fevers. This idea was arrived at by pure reflective thought. The discovery of blood circulation by William Harvey using experimental method and the demonstration of normal body temperature in persons with blackbile using thermometer disproved the 'good humor' hypothesis of health. In later years, biology stated that mind influences, through neural system and endocrine system, our immune system and that our immune system maintains our health. Hence, mind and mental state can affect our health. Of course, health is affected by –

(i) genetic disorders – deficiencies with which a child is born and deficiencies/defects which the child inherits from parents from birth;
(ii) infections and
(iii) life style including food and water we take, rest and exercise we give to our bodies, habits that we have or lack etc.

The term **health** is very frequently used by everybody. *How do we define it*? Health does not simply mean 'absence of disease' or 'physical fitness'. It could be defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. When people are healthy, they are more efficient at work. This increases productivity and brings economic prosperity. Health also increases longevity of people and reduces infant and maternal mortality.

Balanced diet, personal hygiene and regular exercise are very important to maintain good health. Yoga has been practised since time immemorial to achieve physical and mental health. Awareness about diseases and their effect on different bodily functions, vaccination (immunisation) against infectious diseases, proper disposal of wastes, control of vectors and maintenance of hygiene in food and water resources are necessary for achieving good health.

When the functioning of one or more organs or systems of the body is adversely affected, characterised by appearance of various signs and symptoms, we say that we are not healthy, i.e., we have a **disease**. Diseases can be broadly grouped into **infectious** and **non-infectious**. Diseases which are easily transmitted from one person to another, are called **infectious diseases**. Infectious diseases are very common and every one of us suffers from these at sometime or other. Some of the infectious diseases like AIDS are fatal. Among non-infectious diseases, cancer is the major cause of death. Drug and alcohol abuse also affect our health adversely.

7.1 COMMON DISEASES IN HUMANS

A wide range of organisms belonging to bacteria, viruses, fungi, protozoans, helminths, etc., could cause diseases in man. Such disease-causing organisms are called **pathogens**. Most parasites are therefore pathogens as they cause harm to the host by living in (or on) them. The pathogens can enter our body by various means, multiply and interfere with normal vital activities, resulting in morphological and functional damage. Pathogens have to adapt to life within the environment of the host. For example, the pathogens that enter the gut must know a way of surviving in the stomach at low pH and resisting the various digestive enzymes. A few representative members from different groups of pathogenic organisms are discussed here alongwith the diseases caused by them. Preventive and control measures against these diseases in general, are also briefly described.

Salmonella typhi is a pathogenic bacterium which causes **typhoid** fever in human beings. These pathogens generally enter the small intestine through food and water contaminated with them and migrate to other organs through blood. Sustained high fever (39° to 40°C), weakness, stomach pain, constipation, headache and loss of appetite are some of the common symptoms of this disease. Intestinal perforation and death may occur in severe cases. Typhoid fever could be confirmed by

Widal test : A classic case in medicine, that of Mary Mallon nicknamed *Typhoid Mary*, is worth mentioning here. She was a cook by profession and was a typhoid carrier who continued to spread typhoid for several years through the food she prepared.

Bacteria like *Streptococcus pneumoniae* and *Haemophilus influenzae* are responsible for the disease **pneumonia** in humans which infects the alveoli (air filled sacs) of the lungs. As a result of the infection, the alveoli get filled with fluid leading to severe problems in respiration. The symptoms of pneumonia include fever, chills, cough and headache. In severe cases, the lips and finger nails may turn gray to bluish in colour. A healthy person acquires the infection by inhaling the droplets/aerosols released by an infected person or even by sharing glasses and utensils with an infected person. Dysentery, plague, diphtheria, etc., are some of the other bacterial diseases in man.

Many viruses also cause diseases in human beings. Rhino viruses represent one such group of viruses which cause one of the most infectious human ailments – the **common cold**. They infect the nose and respiratory passage but not the lungs. The common cold is characterised by nasal congestion and discharge, sore throat, hoarseness, cough, headache, tiredness, etc., which usually last for 3-7 days. Droplets resulting from cough or sneezes of an infected person are either inhaled directly or transmitted through contaminated objects such as pens, books, cups, doorknobs, computer keyboard or mouse, etc., and cause infection in a healthy person.

Some of the human diseases are caused by protozoans too. You might have heard about ***malaria***, a disease man has been fighting since many years. *Plasmodium*, a tiny protozoan is responsible for this disease. Different species of *Plasmodium* (*P. vivax*, *P. malaria* and *P. falciparum*) are responsible for different types of malaria. Of these, malignant malaria caused by *Plasmodium falciparum* is the most serious one and can even be fatal.

Let us take a glance at the life cycle of *Plasmodium* (Figure 7.1). *Plasmodium* enters the human body as sporozoites (infectious form) through the bite of infected female *Anopheles* mosquito. The parasites initially multiply within the liver cells and then attack the red blood cells (RBCs) resulting in their rupture. The rupture of RBCs is associated with release of a toxic substance, haemozoin, which is responsible for the chill and high fever recurring every three to four days. When a female *Anopheles* mosquito bites an infected person, these parasites enter the mosquito's body and undergo further development. The parasites multiply within them to form sporozoites that are stored in their salivary glands. When these mosquitoes bite a human, the sporozoites are introduced into his/her body, thereby initiating the events mentioned above. It is interesting to note that the malarial parasite requires two hosts – human and mosquitoes – to complete its life cycle (Figure 7.1); the female *Anopheles* mosquito is the vector (transmitting agent) too.

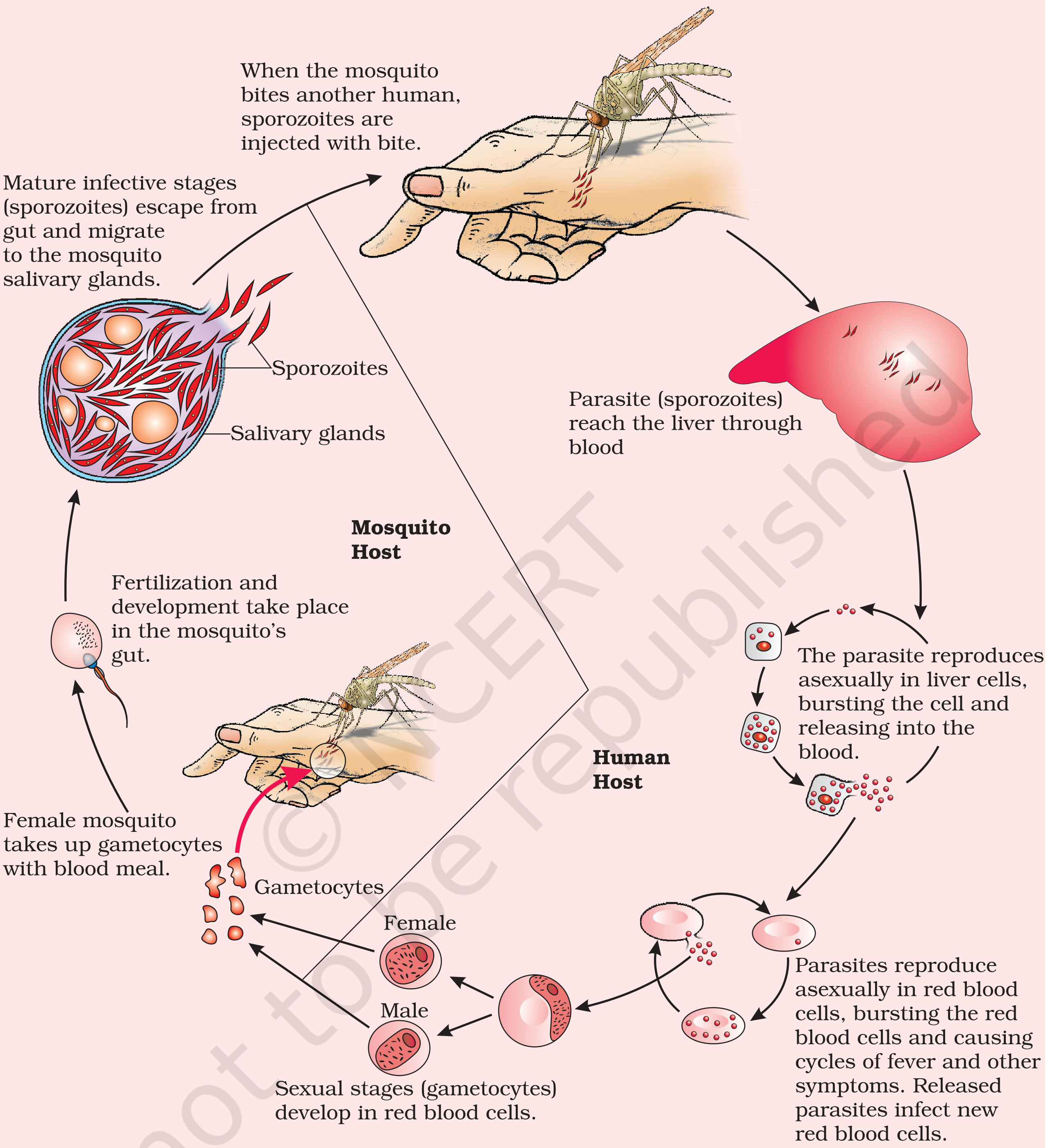

When the mosquito bites another human, sporozoites are injected with bite.
Mature infective stages (sporozoites) escape from gut and migrate to the mosquito salivary glands.
Sporozoites
Salivary glands
Parasite (sporozoites) reach the liver through blood
Mosquito Host
Fertilization and development take place in the mosquito's gut.
The parasite reproduces asexually in liver cells, bursting the cell and releasing into the blood.
Human Host
Female mosquito takes up gametocytes with blood meal.
Gametocytes
Female
Male
Parasites reproduce asexually in red blood cells, bursting the red blood cells and causing cycles of fever and other symptoms. Released parasites infect new red blood cells.
Sexual stages (gametocytes) develop in red blood cells.

Figure 7.1 Stages in the life cycle of *Plasmodium*

Entamoeba histolytica is a protozoan parasite in the large intestine of human which causes **amoebiasis (amoebic dysentery)**. Symptoms of this disease include constipation, abdominal pain and cramps, stools with excess mucous and blood clots. Houseflies act as mechanical carriers and serve to transmit the parasite from faeces of infected person to food and food products, thereby contaminating them. Drinking water and food contaminated by the faecal matter are the main source of infection.

Ascaris, the common round worm and *Wuchereria*, the filarial worm, are some of the helminths which are known to be pathogenic to man. *Ascaris*, an intestinal parasite causes **ascariasis**. Symptoms of these disease include internal bleeding, muscular pain, fever, anemia and blockage of the intestinal passage. The eggs of the parasite are excreted along with the faeces of infected persons which contaminate soil, water, plants, etc. A healthy person acquires this infection through contaminated water, vegetables, fruits, etc.

Wuchereria (W. bancrofti and *W. malayi)*, the filarial worms cause a slowly developing chronic inflammation of the organs in which they live for many years, usually the lymphatic vessels of the lower limbs and the disease is called **elephantiasis** or **filariasis** (Figure 7.2). The genital organs are also often affected, resulting in gross deformities. The pathogens are transmitted to a healthy person through the bite by the female mosquito vectors.

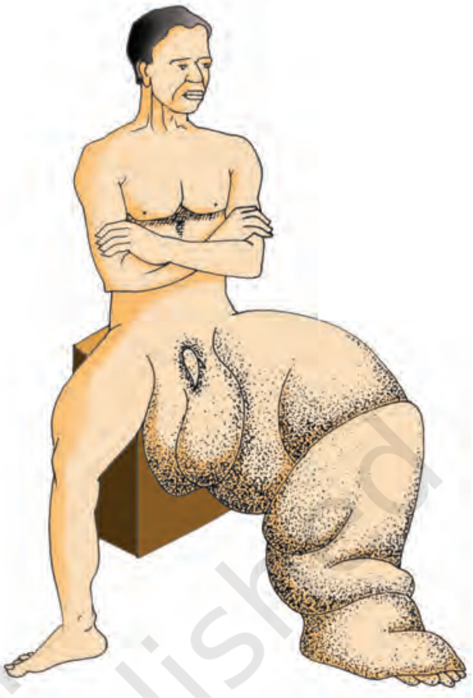


Figure 7.2 Diagram showing inflammation in one of the lower limbs due to elephantiasis

Many fungi belonging to the genera *Microsporum*, *Trichophyton* and *Epidermophyton* are responsible for **ringworms** which is one of the most common infectious diseases in man. Appearance of dry, scaly lesions on various parts of the body such as skin, nails and scalp (Figure 7.3) are the main symptoms of the disease. These lesions are accompanied by intense itching. Heat and moisture help these fungi to grow, which makes them thrive in skin folds such as those in the groin or between the toes. Ringworms are generally acquired from soil or by using towels, clothes or even the comb of infected individuals.

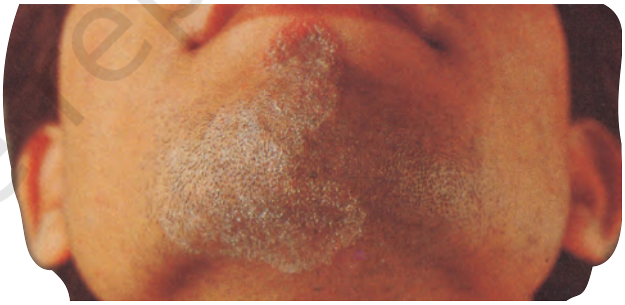


Figure 7.3 Diagram showing ringworm affected area of the skin

Maintenance of personal and public hygiene is very important for prevention and control of many infectious diseases. Measures for personal hygiene include keeping the body clean; consumption of clean drinking water, food, vegetables, fruits, etc. Public hygiene includes proper disposal of waste and excreta; periodic cleaning and disinfection of water reservoirs, pools, cesspools and tanks and observing standard practices of hygiene in public catering. These measures are particularly essential where the infectious agents are transmitted through food and water such as typhoid, amoebiasis and ascariasis. In cases of air-borne diseases such as pneumonia and common cold, in addition to the above measures, close contact with the infected persons or their belongings should be avoided. For diseases such as malaria and filariasis that are transmitted through insect vectors, the most important measure is to control or eliminate the vectors and their breeding places. This can be achieved by avoiding stagnation of water in and around residential areas, regular cleaning of household coolers, use of mosquito nets, introducing fishes like *Gambusia* in ponds that feed on mosquito larvae, spraying of insecticides in ditches, drainage areas and swamps, etc. In addition, doors and windows should be provided with wire mesh to prevent the entry of mosquitoes. Such precautions have become more important especially in the light of recent widespread incidences of the vector-borne (*Aedes* mosquitoes) diseases like dengue and chikungunya in many parts of India.

The advancements made in biological science have armed us to effectively deal with many infectious diseases. The use of vaccines and immunisation programmes have enabled us to completely eradicate a deadly disease like smallpox. A large number of other infectious diseases like polio, diphtheria, pneumonia and tetanus have been controlled to a large extent by the use of vaccines. Biotechnology (about which you will read more in Chapter 10) is at the verge of making available newer and safer vaccines. Discovery of antibiotics and various other drugs has also enabled us to effectively treat infectious diseases.

7.2 IMMUNITY

Everyday we are exposed to large number of infectious agents. However, only a few of these exposures result in disease. Why? This is due to the fact that the body is able to defend itself from most of these foreign agents. This overall ability of the host to fight the disease-causing organisms, conferred by the immune system is called **immunity**.

Immunity is of two types: (i) Innate immunity and (ii) Acquired immunity.

7.2.1 Innate Immunity

Innate immunity is non-specific type of defence, that is present at the time of birth. This is accomplished by providing different types of barriers to the entry of the foreign agents into our body. Innate immunity consist of four types of barriers. These are —

(i) ***Physical barriers*** **:** Skin on our body is the main barrier which prevents entry of the micro-organisms. Mucus coating of the epithelium lining the respiratory, gastrointestinal and urogenital tracts also help in trapping microbes entering our body.

(ii) ***Physiological barriers*** **:** Acid in the stomach, saliva in the mouth, tears from eyes–all prevent microbial growth.

(iii) ***Cellular barriers*** **:** Certain types of leukocytes (WBC) of our body like polymorpho-nuclear leukocytes (PMNL-neutrophils) and monocytes and natural killer (type of lymphocytes) in the blood as well as macrophages in tissues can phagocytose and destroy microbes.

(iv) ***Cytokine barriers* :** Virus-infected cells secrete proteins called **interferons** which protect non-infected cells from further viral infection.

7.2.2 Acquired Immunity

Acquired immunity, on the other hand is pathogen specific. It is characterised by memory. This means when our body encounters a pathogen for the first time it produces a response called **primary response** which is of low intensity. Subsequent encounter with the same pathogen elicits a highly intensified secondary or anamnestic response. This is ascribed to the fact that our body appears to have memory of the first encounter.

The primary and secondary immune responses are carried out with the help of two special types of lymphocytes present in our blood, i.e., **B**-lymphocytes and **T**-lymphocytes.

The B-lymphocytes produce an army of proteins in response to pathogens into our blood to fight with them. These proteins are called antibodies. The T-cells themselves do not secrete antibodies but help B cells to produce them. Each antibody molecule has four peptide chains, two small called **light chains** and two longer called **heavy chains**. Hence, an antibody is represented as H_2L_2. Different types of antibodies are produced in our body. IgA, IgM, IgE, IgG are some of them. A cartoon of an antibody is given in Figure 7.4. Because these antibodies are found in the blood, the response is also called as **humoral immune response**. This is one of the two types of our acquired immune response – antibody mediated. The second type is called cell-mediated immune response or **cell-mediated immunity** (CMI). The T-lymphocytes mediate CMI. Very often, when some human organs like heart, eye, liver, kidney fail to function satisfactorily, transplantation is the only remedy to enable the patient to live a normal life. Then a search begins – to find a suitable donor. *Why is it that the organs cannot be taken from just anybody? What is it that the doctors check?* Grafts from

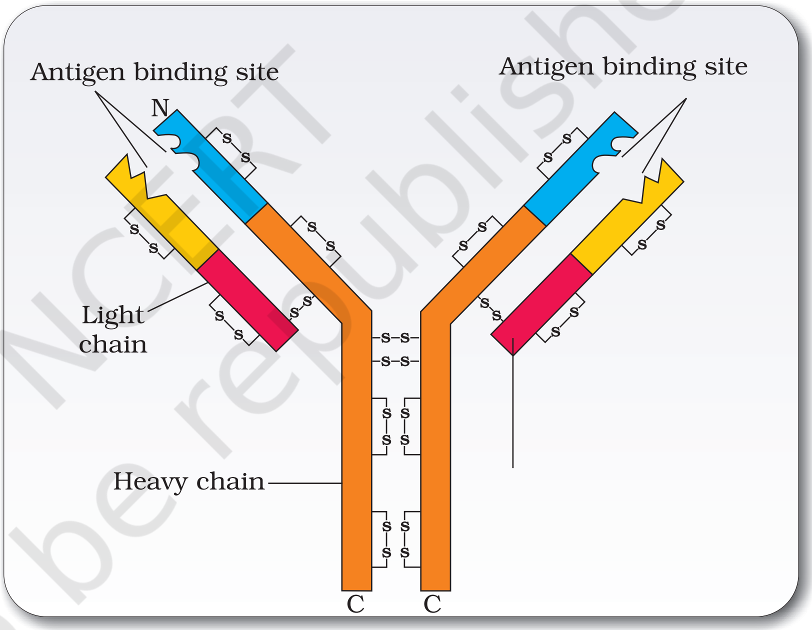


Figure 7.4 Structure of an antibody molecule

just any source – an animal, another primate, or any human beings cannot be made since the grafts would be rejected sooner or later. Tissue matching, blood group matching are essential before undertaking any graft/transplant and even after this the patient has to take immuno–suppresants all his/her life. The body is able to differentiate 'self' and 'nonself' and the cell-mediated immune response is responsible for the graft rejection.

7.2.3 Active and Passive Immunity

When a host is exposed to antigens, which may be in the form of living or dead microbes or other proteins, antibodies are produced in the host body. This type of immunity is called **active immunity.** Active immunity is slow and takes time to give its full effective response. Injecting the microbes deliberately during immunisation or infectious organisms gaining access into body during natural infection induce active immunity. When ready-made antibodies are directly given to protect the body against foreign agents, it is called **passive immunity**. *Do you know why mother's milk is considered very essential for the new-born infant?* The yellowish fluid **colostrum** secreted by mother during the initial days of lactation has abundant antibodies (IgA) to protect the infant. The foetus also receives some antibodies from their mother, through the placenta during pregnancy. These are some examples of passive immunity.

7.2.4 Vaccination and Immunisation

The principle of immunisation or vaccination is based on the property of 'memory' of the immune system. In vaccination, a preparation of antigenic proteins of pathogen or inactivated/weakened pathogen (vaccine) are introduced into the body. The antibodies produced in the body against these antigens would neutralise the pathogenic agents during actual infection. The vaccines also generate memory – B and T-cells that recognise the pathogen quickly on subsequent exposure and overwhelm the invaders with a massive production of antibodies. If a person is infected with some deadly microbes to which quick immune response is required as in tetanus, we need to directly inject the preformed antibodies, or antitoxin (a preparation containing antibodies to the toxin). Even in cases of snakebites, the injection which is given to the patients, contain preformed antibodies against the snake venom. This type of immunisation is called **passive immunisation**.

Recombinant DNA technology has allowed the production of antigenic polypeptides of pathogen in bacteria or yeast. Vaccines produced using this approach allow large scale production and hence greater availability for immunisation, e.g., hepatitis B vaccine produced from yeast.

7.2.5 Allergies

When you have gone to a new place and suddenly you started sneezing, wheezing for no explained reason, and when you went away, your symptoms dissappeared. Did this happen to you? Some of us are sensitive to some particles in the environment. The above-mentioned reaction could be because of allergy to pollen, mites, etc., which are different in different places.

The exaggerated response of the immune system to certain antigens present in the environment is called **allergy**. The substances to which such an immune response is produced are called allergens. The antibodies produced to these are of IgE type. Common examples of allergens are mites in dust, pollens, animal dander, etc. Symptoms of allergic reactions include sneezing, watery eyes, running nose and difficulty in breathing. Allergy is due to the release of chemicals like histamine and serotonin from the mast cells. For determining the cause of allergy, the patient is exposed to or injected with very small doses of possible allergens, and the reactions studied. The use of drugs like anti-histamine, adrenalin and steroids quickly reduce the symptoms of allergy. Somehow, modern-day life style has resulted in lowering of immunity and more sensitivity to allergens – more and more children in metro cities of India suffer from allergies and asthma due to sensitivity to the environment. This could be because of the protected environment provided early in life.

7.2.6 Auto Immunity

Memory-based acquired immunity evolved in higher vertebrates based on the ability to differentiate foreign organisms (e.g., pathogens) from self-cells. While we still do not understand the basis of this, two corollaries of this ability have to be understood. One, higher vertebrates can distinguish foreign molecules as well as foreign organisms. Most of the experimental immunology deals with this aspect. Two, sometimes, due to genetic and other unknown reasons, the body attacks self-cells. This results in damage to the body and is called **auto-immune** disease. Rheumatoid arthritis which affects many people in our society is an auto-immune disease.

7.2.7 Immune System in the Body

The human immune system consists of lymphoid organs, tissues, cells and soluble molecules like antibodies. As you have read, immune system is unique in the sense that it recognises foreign antigens, responds to these and remembers them. The immune system also plays an important role in allergic reactions, auto-immune diseases and organ transplantation.

Lymphoid organs: These are the organs where origin and/or maturation and proliferation of lymphocytes occur. The primary lymphoid organs are **bone marrow** and **thymus** where immature lymphocytes differentiate

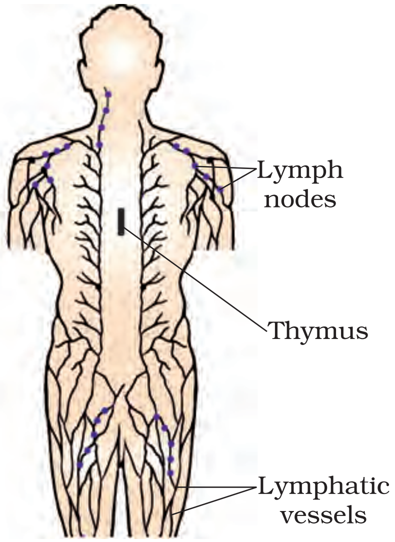


Figure 7.5 Diagrammatic representation of Lymph nodes

into antigen-sensitive lymphocytes. After maturation the lymphocytes migrate to secondary lymphoid organs like spleen, lymph nodes, tonsils, Peyer's patches of small intestine and appendix. The secondary lymphoid organs provide the sites for interaction of lymphocytes with the antigen, which then proliferate to become effector cells. The location of various lymphoid organs in the human body is shown in Figure 7.5.

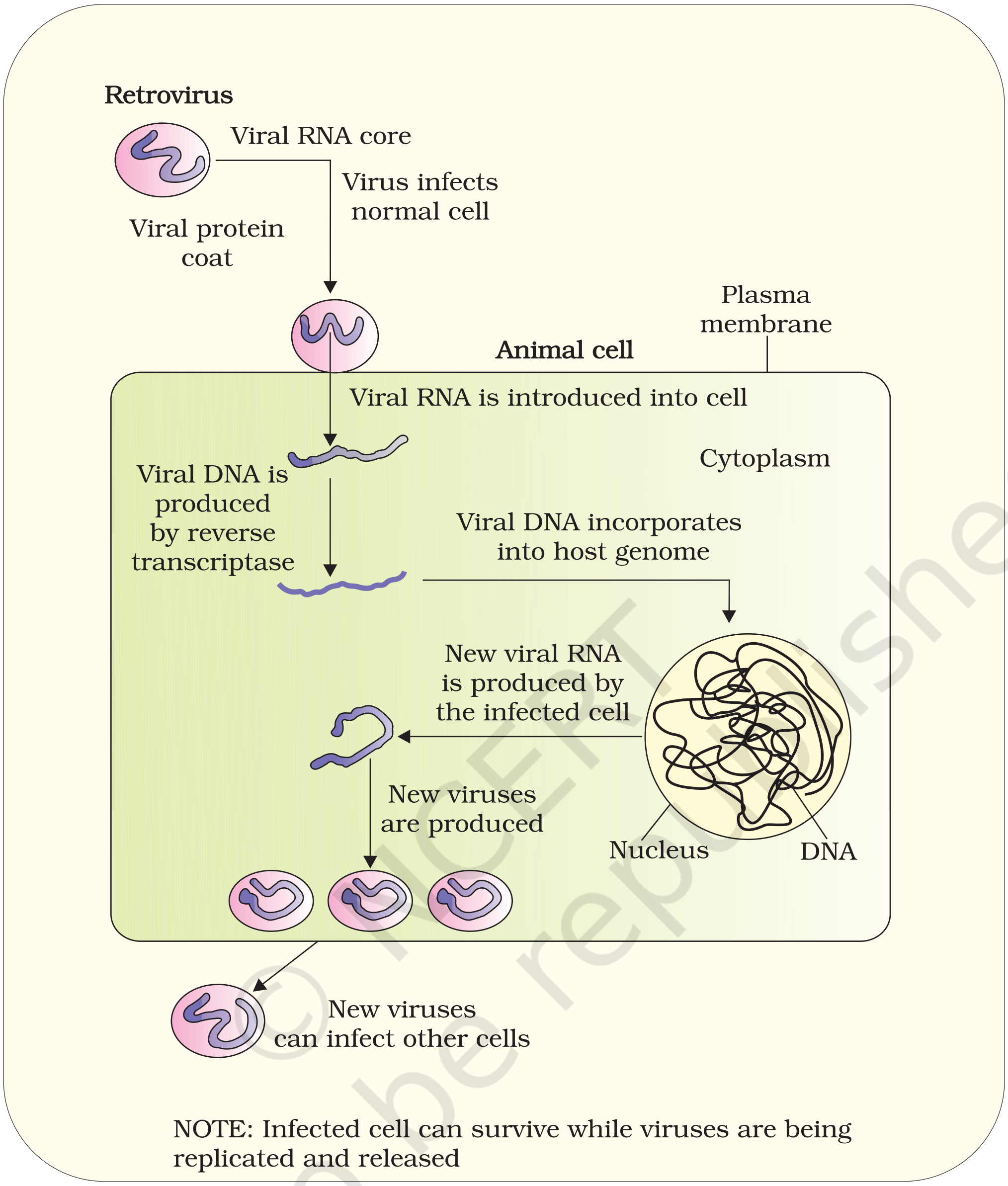
The bone marrow is the main lymphoid organ where all blood cells including lymphocytes are produced. The thymus is a lobed organ located near the heart and beneath the breastbone. The thymus is quite large at the time of birth but keeps reducing in size with age and by the time puberty is attained it reduces to a very small size. Both bone-marrow and thymus provide micro-environments for the development and maturation of T-lymphocytes. The spleen is a large bean-shaped organ. It mainly contains lymphocytes and phagocytes. It acts as a filter of the blood by trapping blood-borne micro-organisms. Spleen also has a large reservoir of erythrocytes. The lymph nodes are small solid structures located at different points along the lymphatic system. Lymph nodes serve to trap the micro-organisms or other antigens, which happen to get into the lymph and tissue fluid. Antigens trapped in the lymph nodes are responsible for the activation of lymphocytes present there and cause the immune response.

There is lymphoid tissue also located within the lining of the major tracts (respiratory, digestive and urogenital tracts) called **mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue** (MALT). It constitutes about 50 per cent of the lymphoid tissue in human body.

7.3 AIDS

The word AIDS stands for **Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome**. This means deficiency of immune system, acquired during the lifetime of an individual indicating that it is not a congenital disease. 'Syndrome' means a group of symptoms. AIDS was first reported in 1981 and in the last twenty-five years or so, it has spread all over the world killing more than 25 million persons.

AIDS is caused by the Human Immuno deficiency Virus (HIV), a member of a group of viruses called **retrovirus**, which have an envelope enclosing the RNA genome (Figure 7.6). Transmission of HIV-infection generally occurs by (a) sexual contact with infected person, (b) by transfusion of contaminated blood and blood products, (c) by sharing infected needles as in the case of intravenous drug abusers and (d) from infected mother to her child through placenta. So, people who are at high risk of getting this infection includes - individuals who have multiple


Retrovirus
Viral RNA core
Virus infects normal cell
Viral protein coat
Plasma membrane
Animal cell
Viral RNA is introduced into cell
Cytoplasm
Viral DNA is produced by reverse transcriptase
Viral DNA incorporates into host genome
New viral RNA is produced by the infected cell
New viruses are produced
Nucleus
DNA
New viruses can infect other cells

NOTE: Infected cell can survive while viruses are being replicated and released

Figure 7.6 Replication of retrovirus

sexual partners, drug addicts who take drugs intravenously, individuals who require repeated blood transfusions and children born to an HIV infected mother. *Do you know–when do people need repeated blood transfusion? Find out and make a list of such conditions.* It is important to note that HIV/AIDS is not spread by mere touch or physical contact; it spreads only through body fluids. It is, hence, imperative, for the physical and psychological well-being, that the HIV/AIDS infected persons are not isolated from family and society. There is always a time-lag between the infection and appearance of AIDS symptoms. This period may vary from a few months to many years (usually 5-10 years).

After getting into the body of the person, the virus enters into macrophages where RNA genome of the virus replicates to form viral DNA with the help of the enzyme reverse transcriptase. This viral DNA gets incorporated into host cell's DNA and directs the infected cells to produce virus particles (Figure 7.6). The macrophages continue to produce virus and in this way acts like a HIV factory. Simultaneously, HIV enters into helper T-lymphocytes (T_H), replicates and produce progeny viruses. The progeny viruses released in the blood attack other helper T-lymphocytes. This is repeated leading to a progressive decrease in the number of helper T-lymphocytes in the body of the infected person. During this period, the person suffers from bouts of fever, diarrhoea and weight loss. Due to decrease in the number of helper T lymphocytes, the person starts suffering from infections that could have been otherwise overcome such as those due to bacteria especially *Mycobacterium*, viruses, fungi and even parasites like *Toxoplasma*. The patient becomes so immuno-deficient that he/she is unable to protect himself/herself against these infections. A widely used diagnostic test for AIDS is **enzyme linked immuno-sorbent assay** (ELISA). Treatment of AIDS with anti-retroviral drugs is only partially effective. They can only prolong the life of the patient but cannot prevent death, which is inevitable.

Prevention of AIDS : As AIDS has no cure, prevention is the best option. Moreover, HIV infection, more often, spreads due to conscious behaviour patterns and is not something that happens inadvertently, like pneumonia or typhoid. Of course, infection in blood transfusion patients, new-borns (from mother) etc., may take place due to poor monitoring. The only excuse may be ignorance and it has been rightly said – "don't die of ignorance". In our country the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) and other non-governmental organisation (NGOs) are doing a lot to educate people about AIDS. WHO has started a number of programmes to prevent the spreading of HIV infection. Making blood (from blood banks) safe from HIV, ensuring the use of only disposable needles and syringes in public and private hospitals and clinics, free distribution of condoms, controlling drug abuse, advocating safe sex and promoting regular check-ups for HIV in susceptible populations, are some such steps taken up.

Infection with HIV or having AIDS is something that should not be hidden – since then, the infection may spread to many more people. HIV/AIDS-infected people need help and sympathy instead of being shunned by society. Unless society recognises it as a problem to be dealt with in a collective manner – the chances of wider spread of the disease increase manifold. It is a malady that can only be tackled, by the society and medical fraternity acting together, to prevent the spread of the disease.

7.4 CANCER

Cancer is one of the most dreaded diseases of human beings and is a major cause of death all over the globe. More than a million Indians suffer from cancer and a large number of them die from it annually. The mechanisms that underlie development of cancer or oncogenic transformation of cells, its treatment and control have been some of the most intense areas of research in biology and medicine.

In our body, cell growth and differentiation is highly controlled and regulated. In cancer cells, there is breakdown of these regulatory mechanisms. Normal cells show a property called **contact inhibition** by virtue of which contact with other cells inhibits their uncontrolled growth. Cancer cells appears to have lost this property. As a result of this, cancerous cells just continue to divide giving rise to masses of cells called **tumors**. Tumors are of two types: benign and malignant. **Benign tumors** normally remain confined to their original location and do not spread to other parts of the body and cause little damage. The **malignant tumors**, on the other hand are a mass of proliferating cells called neoplastic or tumor cells. These cells grow very rapidly, invading and damaging the surrounding normal tissues. As these cells actively divide and grow they also starve the normal cells by competing for vital nutrients. Cells sloughed from such tumors reach distant sites through blood, and wherever they get lodged in the body, they start a new tumor there. This property called **metastasis** is the most feared property of malignant tumors.

Causes of cancer : Transformation of normal cells into cancerous neoplastic cells may be induced by physical, chemical or biological agents. These agents are called **carcinogens**. Ionising radiations like X-rays and gamma rays and non-ionizing radiations like UV cause DNA damage leading to neoplastic transformation. The chemical carcinogens present in tobacco smoke have been identified as a major cause of lung cancer. Cancer causing viruses called **oncogenic viruses** have genes called **viral oncogenes**. Furthermore, several genes called **cellular oncogenes** (*c-onc*) or **proto oncogenes** have been identified in normal cells which, when activated under certain conditions, could lead to oncogenic transformation of the cells.

Cancer detection and diagnosis : Early detection of cancers is essential as it allows the disease to be treated successfully in many cases. Cancer detection is based on biopsy and histopathological studies of the tissue and blood and bone marrow tests for increased cell counts in the case of leukemias. In biopsy, a piece of the suspected tissue cut into thin sections is stained and examined under microscope (histopathological studies) by a pathologist. Techniques like radiography (use of X-rays), CT (computed tomography) and MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) are very useful to detect cancers of the internal organs. Computed tomography uses X-rays to generate a three-dimensional image of the internals of an object. MRI uses strong magnetic fields and non-ionising radiations to accurately detect pathological and physiological changes in the living tissue.

Antibodies against cancer-specific antigens are also used for detection of certain cancers. Techniques of molecular biology can be applied to detect genes in individuals with inherited susceptibility to certain cancers. Identification of such genes, which predispose an individual to certain cancers, may be very helpful in prevention of cancers. Such individuals may be advised to avoid exposure to particular carcinogens to which they are susceptible (e.g., tobacco smoke in case of lung cancer).

Treatment of cancer : The common approaches for treatment of cancer are surgery, radiation therapy and immunotherapy. In radiotherapy, tumor cells are irradiated lethally, taking proper care of the normal tissues surrounding the tumor mass. Several chemotherapeutic drugs are used to kill cancerous cells. Some of these are specific for particular tumors. Majority of drugs have side effects like hair loss, anemia, etc. Most cancers are treated by combination of surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy. Tumor cells have been shown to avoid detection and destruction by immune system. Therefore, the patients are given substances called biological response modifiers such as **α-interferon** which activates their immune system and helps in destroying the tumor.

7.5 DRUGS AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

Surveys and statistics show that use of drugs and alcohol has been on the rise especially among the youth. This is really a cause of concern as it could result in many harmful effects. Proper education and guidance would enable youth to safeguard themselves against these dangerous behaviour patterns and follow healthy lifestyles.

The drugs, which are commonly abused are opioids, cannabinoids and coca alkaloids. Majority of these are obtained from flowering plants. Some are obtained from fungi.

Opioids are the drugs, which bind to specific opioid receptors present in our central nervous system and gastrointestinal tract. Heroin (Figure 7.7), commonly called *smack* is chemically diacetylmorphine which is a white, odourless, bitter crystalline compound. This is obtained by acetylation of morphine (Figure 7.7), which is extracted from the latex of

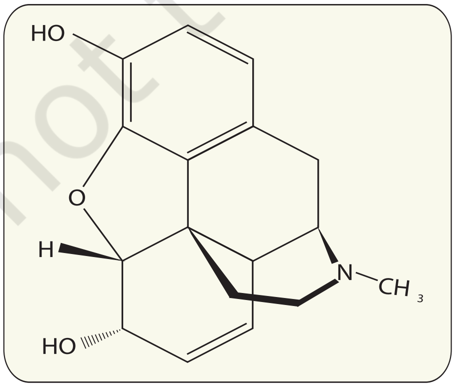


Figure 7.7 Chemical structure of Morphine

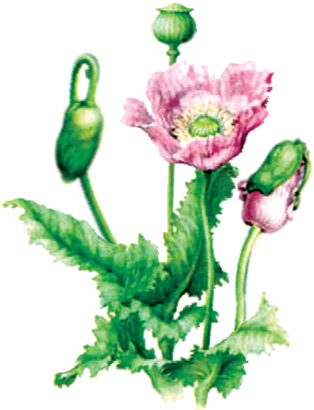


Figure 7.8 Opium poppy

poppy plant *Papaver somniferum* (Figure 7.8). Generally taken by snorting and injection, heroin is a depressant and slows down body functions.

Cannabinoids are a group of chemicals (Figure 7.9), which interact with cannabinoid receptors present principally in the brain. Natural cannabinoids are obtained from the inflorescences of the plant *Cannabis sativa* (Figure 7.10). The flower tops, leaves and the resin of cannabis plant are used in various combinations to produce marijuana, hashish, charas and ganja. Generally taken by inhalation and oral ingestion, these are known for their effects on cardiovascular system of the body.

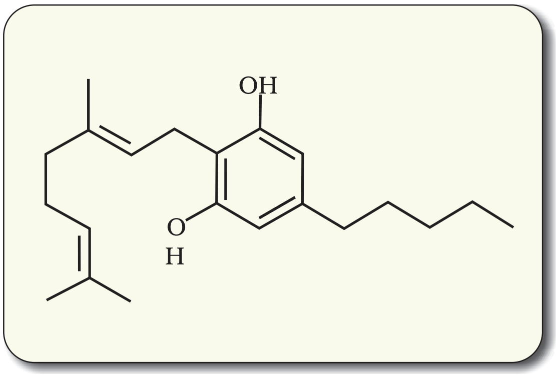


Figure 7.9 Skeletal structure of cannabinoid molecule

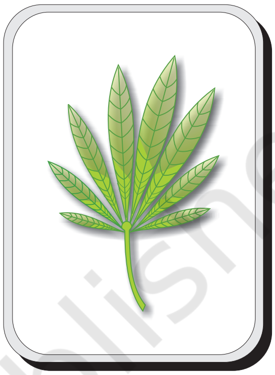


Figure 7.10 Leaves of *Cannabis sativa*

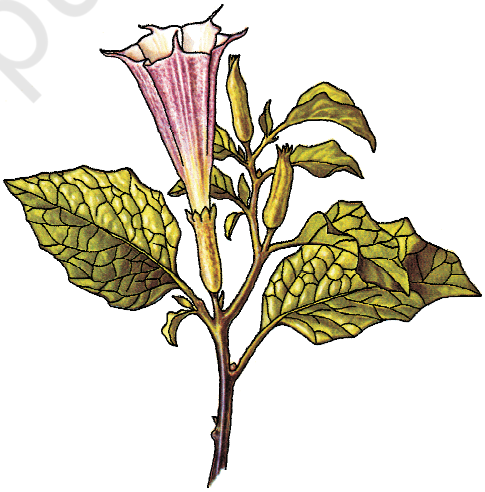


Figure 7.11 Flowering branch of *Datura*

Coca alkaloid or **cocaine** is obtained from coca plant *Erythroxylum coca*, native to South America. It interferes with the transport of the neuro-transmitter dopamine. Cocaine, commonly called **coke** or **crack** is usually snorted. It has a potent stimulating action on central nervous system, producing a sense of euphoria and increased energy. Excessive dosage of cocaine causes hallucinations. Other well-known plants with hallucinogenic properties are *Atropa belladona* and *Datura* (Figure 7.11). These days cannabinoids are also being abused by some sportspersons.

Drugs like barbiturates, amphetamines, benzodiazepines, and other similar drugs, that are normally used as medicines to help patients cope with mental illnesses like depression and insomnia, are often abused. Morphine is a very effective sedative and painkiller, and is very useful in patients who have undergone surgery. Several plants, fruits and seeds having hallucinogenic properties have been used for hundreds of years in folk-medicine, religious ceremonies and rituals all over the globe. When these are taken for a purpose other than medicinal use or in amounts/frequency that impairs one's physical, physiological or psychological functions, it constitutes drug abuse.

Smoking also paves the way to hard drugs. Tobacco has been used by human beings for more than 400 years. It is smoked, chewed or used as a snuff. Tobacco contains a large number of chemical substances including nicotine, an alkaloid. Nicotine stimulates adrenal gland to release adrenaline and nor-adrenaline into blood circulation, both of which raise blood pressure and increase heart rate. Smoking is associated with increased incidence of cancers of lung, urinary bladder and throat, bronchitis, emphysema, coronary heart disease, gastric ulcer, etc. Tobacco chewing is associated with increased risk of cancer of the oral cavity. Smoking increases carbon monoxide (CO) content in blood and reduces the concentration of haembound oxygen. This causes oxygen deficiency in the body.

When one buys packets of cigarettes one cannot miss the statutory warning that is present on the packing which warns against smoking and says how it is injurious to health. Yet, smoking is very prevalent in society, both among young and old. Knowing the dangers of smoking and chewing tobacco, and its addictive nature, the youth and old need to avoid these habits. Any addict requires counselling and medical help to get rid of the habit.

7.5.1 Adolescence and Drug/Alcohol Abuse

Adolescence means both ‘a period’ and ‘a process’ during which a child becomes mature in terms of his/her attitudes and beliefs for effective participation in society. The period between 12-18 years of age may be thought of as adolescence period. In other words, adolescence is a bridge linking childhood and adulthood. Adolescence is accompanied by several biological and behavioural changes. Adolescence, thus is a very vulnerable phase of mental and psychological development of an individual.

Curiosity, need for adventure and excitement, and experimentation, constitute common causes, which motivate youngsters towards drug and alcohol use. A child’s natural curiosity motivates him/her to experiment. This is complicated further by effects that might be perceived as benefits, of alcohol or drug use. Thus, the first use of drugs or alcohol may be out of curiosity or experimentation, but later the child starts using these to escape facing problems. Of late, stress, from pressures to excel in academics or examinations, has played a significant role in persuading the youngsters to try alcohol and drugs. The perception among youth that it is ‘cool’ or progressive to smoke, use drugs or alcohol, is also in a way a major cause for youth to start these habits. Television, movies, newspapers, internet also help to promote this perception. Other factors that have been seen to be associated with drug and alcohol abuse among adolescents are unstable or unsupportive family structures and peer pressure.

7.5.2 Addiction and Dependence

Because of the perceived benefits, drugs are frequently used repeatedly. The most important thing, which one fails to realise, is the inherent addictive nature of alcohol and drugs. Addiction is a psychological attachment to certain effects – such as euphoria and a temporary feeling of well-being – associated with drugs and alcohol. These drive people to take them even when these are not needed, or even when their use becomes self-destructive. With repeated use of drugs, the tolerance level of the receptors present in our body increases. Consequently the receptors respond only to higher doses of drugs or alcohol leading to greater intake and addiction. However, it should be clearly borne in mind that use of these drugs even once, can be a fore-runner to addiction. Thus, the addictive potential of drugs and alcohol, pull the user into a vicious circle leading to their regular use (abuse) from which he/she may not be able to get out. In the absence of any guidance or counselling, the person gets addicted and becomes dependent on their use.

Dependence is the tendency of the body to manifest a characteristic and unpleasant **withdrawal syndrome** if regular dose of drugs/alcohol is abruptly discontinued. This is characterised by anxiety, shakiness, nausea and sweating, which may be relieved when use is resumed again. In some cases, withdrawal symptoms can be severe and even life threatening and the person may need medical supervision.

Dependence leads the patient to ignore all social norms in order to get sufficient funds to satiate his/her needs. These result in many social adjustment problems.

7.5.3 Effects of Drug/Alcohol Abuse

The immediate adverse effects of drugs and alcohol abuse are manifested in the form of reckless behaviour, vandalism and violence. Excessive doses of drugs may lead to coma and death due to respiratory failure, heart failure or cerebral hemorrhage. A combination of drugs or their intake along with alcohol generally results in overdosing and even deaths. The most common warning signs of drug and alcohol abuse among youth include drop in academic performance, unexplained absence from school/college, lack of interest in personal hygiene, withdrawal, isolation, depression, fatigue, aggressive and rebellious behaviour, deteriorating relationships with family and friends, loss of interest in hobbies, change in sleeping and eating habits, fluctuations in weight, appetite, etc.

There may even be some far-reaching implications of drug/alcohol abuse. If an abuser is unable to get money to buy drugs/alcohol he/she may turn to stealing. The adverse effects are just not restricted to the person who is using drugs or alcohol. At times, a drug/alcohol addict becomes the cause of mental and financial distress to his/her entire family and friends.

Those who take drugs intravenously (direct injection into the vein using a needle and syringe), are much more likely to acquire serious infections like AIDS and Hepatitis B. The viruses, which are responsible for these diseases, are transferred from one person to another by sharing of infected needles and syringes. Both AIDS and Hepatitis B infections are chronic infections and ultimately fatal. Both can be transmitted through sexual contact or infected blood.

The use of alcohol during adolescence may also have long-term effects. It could lead to heavy drinking in adulthood. The chronic use of drugs and alcohol damages nervous system and liver **(cirrhosis)**. The use of drugs and alcohol during pregnancy is also known to adversely affect the foetus.

Another misuse of drugs is what certain sportspersons do to enhance their performance. They (mis)use narcotic analgesics, anabolic steroids, diuretics and certain hormones in sports to increase muscle strength and bulk and to promote aggressiveness and as a result increase athletic performance. The side-effects of the use of anabolic steroids in females include masculinisation (features like males), increased aggressiveness, mood swings, depression, abnormal menstrual cycles, excessive hair growth on the face and body, enlargement of clitoris, deepening of voice. In males it includes acne, increased aggressiveness, mood swings, depression, reduction of size of the testicles, decreased sperm production, potential for kidney and liver dysfunction, breast enlargement, premature baldness, enlargement of the prostate gland. These effects may be permanent with prolonged use. In the adolescent male or female, severe facial and body acne, and premature closure of the growth centres of the long bones may result in stunted growth.

7.5.4 Prevention and Control

The age-old adage of 'prevention is better than cure' holds true here also. It is also true that habits such as smoking, taking drug or alcohol are more likely to be taken up at a young age, more during adolescence. Hence, it is best to identify the situations that may push an adolescent towards use of drugs or alcohol, and to take remedial measures well in time. In this regard, the parents and the teachers have a special responsibility. Parenting that combines with high levels of nurturance and consistent discipline, has been associated with lowered risk of substance (alcohol/drugs/tobacco) abuse. Some of the measures mentioned here would be particularly useful for prevention and control of alcohol and drugs abuse among adolescents

(i) ***Avoid undue peer pressure*** - Every child has his/her own choice and personality, which should be respected and nurtured. A child should not be pushed unduly to perform beyond his/her threshold limits; be it studies, sports or other activities.

(ii) ***Education and counselling*** - Educating and counselling him/her to face problems and stresses, and to accept disappointments and failures as a part of life. It would also be worthwhile to channelise the child's energy into healthy pursuits like sports, reading, music, yoga and other extracurricular activities.

(iii) ***Seeking help from parents and peers*** - Help from parents and peers should be sought immediately so that they can guide appropriately. Help may even be sought from close and trusted friends. Besides getting proper advise to sort out their problems, this would help young to vent their feelings of anxiety and guilt.

(iv) ***Looking for danger signs*** - Alert parents and teachers need to look for and identify the danger signs discussed above. Even friends, if they find someone using drugs or alcohol, should not hesitate to bring this to the notice of parents or teacher in the best interests of the person concerned. Appropriate measures would then be required to diagnose the malady and the underlying causes. This would help in initiating proper remedial steps or treatment.

(v) ***Seeking professional and medical help*** - A lot of help is available in the form of highly qualified psychologists, psychiatrists, and de-addiction and rehabilitation programmes to help individuals who have unfortunately got in the quagmire of drug/alcohol abuse. With such help, the affected individual with sufficient efforts and will power, can get rid of the problem completely and lead a perfectly normal and healthy life.

SUMMARY

Health is not just the absence of disease. It is a state of complete physical, mental, social and psychological well-being. Diseases like typhoid, cholera, pneumonia, fungal infections of skin, malaria and many others are a major cause of distress to human beings. Vector-borne diseases like malaria especially one caused by *Plasmodium falciparum*, if not treated, may prove fatal. Besides personal cleanliness and hygiene, public health measures like proper disposal of waste, decontamination of drinking water, control of vectors like mosquitoes and immunisation are very helpful in preventing these diseases. Our immune system plays the major role in preventing these diseases when we are exposed to disease-causing agents. The innate defences of our body like skin, mucous membranes, antimicrobial substances present in our tears, saliva and the phagocytic cells help to block the entry of pathogens into our body. If the pathogens succeed in gaining entry to our body, specific antibodies (humoral immune response) and cells (cell mediated immune response) serve to kill these pathogens. Immune system has memory. On subsequent exposure to same pathogen, the immune response is rapid and more intense. This forms the basis of protection afforded by vaccination and immunisation. Among other diseases, AIDS and cancer kill a large number of individuals worldwide. AIDS caused by the human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV) is fatal but can be prevented if certain precautions are taken. Many cancers are curable if detected early and appropriate therapeutic measures are taken. Of late, drug and alcohol abuse among youth and adolescents is becoming another cause of concern. Because of the addictive nature of alcohol and drugs, and their perceived benefits like relief from stress, a person may try taking these in the face of peer pressure, examinations-related and competition-related stresses. In doing so, he/she may get addicted to them. Education about their harmful effects, counselling and seeking immediate professional and medical help would totally relieve the individual from these evils.

EXERCISES

1. What are the various public health measures, which you would suggest as safeguard against infectious diseases?
2. In which way has the study of biology helped us to control infectious diseases?
3. How does the transmission of each of the following diseases take place?
   (a) Amoebiasis (b) Malaria (c) Ascariasis (d) Pneumonia
4. What measure would you take to prevent water-borne diseases?
5. Discuss with your teacher what does 'a suitable gene' means, in the context of DNA vaccines.
6. Name the primary and secondary lymphoid organs.
7. The following are some well-known abbreviations, which have been used in this chapter. Expand each one to its full form:
   (a) MALT (b) CMI (c) AIDS (d) NACO
   (e) HIV
8. Differentiate the following and give examples of each:
   (a) Innate and acquired immunity (b) Active and passive immunity
9. Draw a well-labelled diagram of an antibody molecule.
10. What are the various routes by which transmission of human immuno-deficiency virus takes place?
11. What is the mechanism by which the AIDS virus causes deficiency of immune system of the infected person?
12. How is a cancerous cell different from a normal cell?
13. Explain what is meant by metastasis.
14. List the harmful effects caused by alcohol/drug abuse.
15. Do you think that friends can influence one to take alcohol/drugs? If yes, how may one protect himself/herself from such an influence?
16. Why is that once a person starts taking alcohol or drugs, it is difficult to get rid of this habit? Discuss it with your teacher.
17. In your view what motivates youngsters to take to alcohol or drugs and how can this be avoided?

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CHAPTER 8

MICROBES IN HUMAN WELFARE

8.1 *Microbes in Household Products*

8.2 *Microbes in Industrial Products*

8.3 *Microbes in Sewage Treatment*

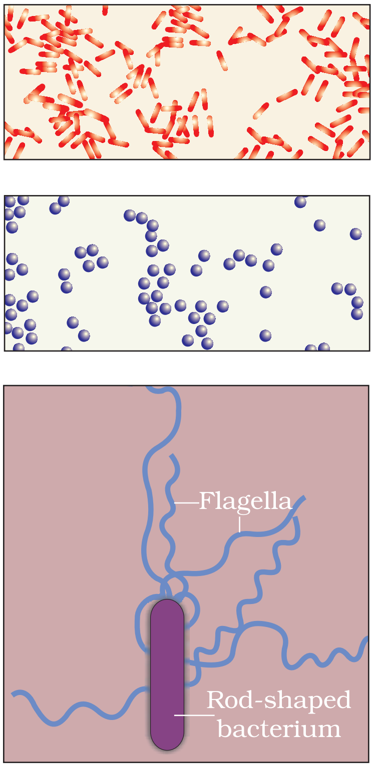
8.4 *Microbes in Production of Biogas*

8.5 *Microbes as Biocontrol Agents*

8.6 *Microbes as Biofertilisers*

Besides macroscopic plants and animals, microbes are the major components of biological systems on this earth. You have studied about the diversity of living organisms in Class XI. *Do you remember which Kingdoms among the living organisms contain micro-organisms? Which are the ones that are only microscopic?* Microbes are present everywhere – in soil, water, air, inside our bodies and that of other animals and plants. They are present even at sites where no other life-form could possibly exist–sites such as deep inside the geysers (thermal vents) where the temperature may be as high as 100^0C, deep in the soil, under the layers of snow several metres thick, and in highly acidic environments. Microbes are diverse–protozoa, bacteria, fungi and microscopic animal and plant viruses, viroids and also prions that are proteinacious infectious agents. Some of the microbes are shown in Figures 8.1 and 8.2.

Microbes like bacteria and many fungi can be grown on nutritive media to form colonies (Figure 8.3), that can be seen with the naked eyes. Such cultures are useful in studies on micro-organisms.

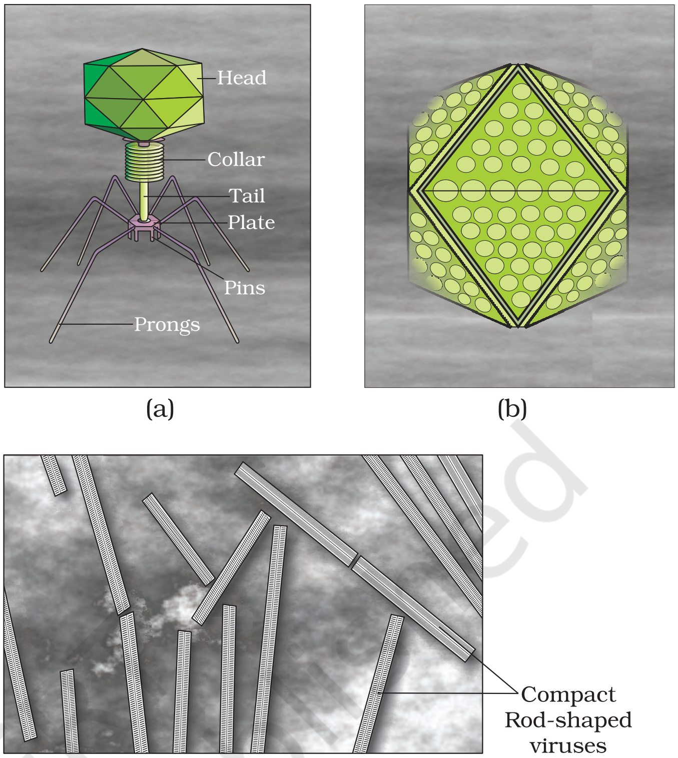

Flagella
Rod-shaped bacterium

(a)

(b)

(c)

Figure 8.1 Bacteria: (a) Rod-shaped, magnified 1500X; (b) Spherical shaped, magnified1500X; (c) A rod-shaped bacterium showing flagella, magnified 50,000X

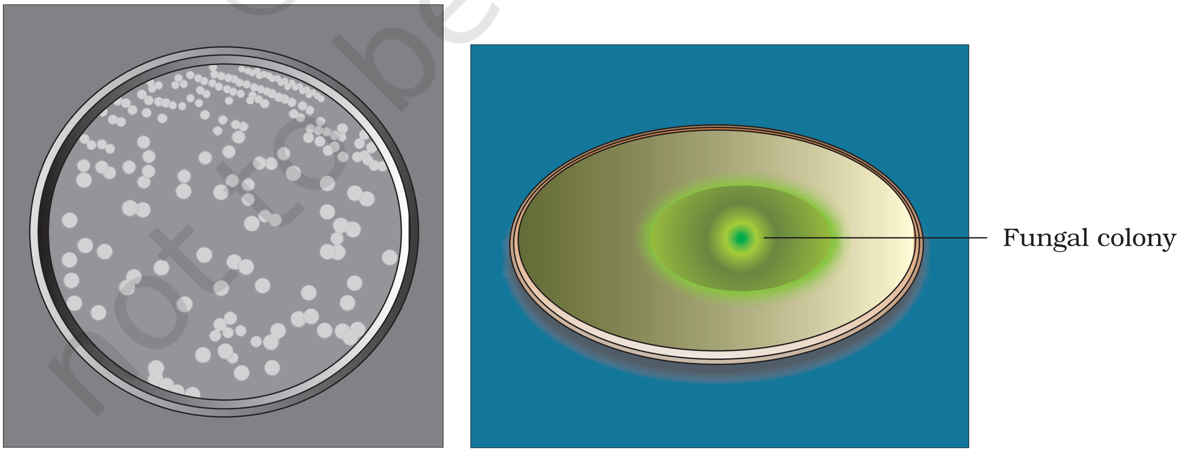

Head
Collar
Tail
Plate
Pins
Prongs
Compact
Rod-shaped
viruses

(a)

(b)

(c)

Figure 8.2 Viruses: (a) A bacteriophage; (b) Adenovirus which causes respiratory infections; (c) Rod-shaped Tobacco Mosaic Virus (TMV). Magnified about 1,00,000–1,50,000X


Fungal colony

(a)

(b)

Figure 8.3 (a) Colonies of bacteria growing in a petri dish; (b) Fungal colony growing in a petri dish

In chapter 7, you have read that microbes cause a large number of diseases in human beings. They also cause diseases in animals and plants. But this should not make you think that all microbes are harmful; several microbes are useful to man in diverse ways. Some of the most important contributions of microbes to human welfare are discussed in this chapter.

8.1 Microbes in Household Products

You would be surprised to know that we use microbes or products derived from them everyday. A common example is the production of curd from milk. Micro-organisms such as *Lactobacillus* and others commonly called **lactic acid bacteria (LAB)** grow in milk and convert it to curd. During growth, the LAB produce acids that coagulate and partially digest the milk proteins. A small amount of curd added to the fresh milk as inoculum or starter contain millions of LAB, which at suitable temperatures multiply, thus converting milk to curd, which also improves its nutritional quality by increasing vitamin B_{12}. In our stomach too, the LAB play very beneficial role in checking disease-causing microbes.

The dough, which is used for making foods such as *dosa* and *idli* is also fermented by bacteria. The puffed-up appearance of dough is due to the production of CO_2 gas. *Can you tell which metabolic pathway is taking place resulting in the formation of CO_2? Where do you think the bacteria for these fermentations come from?* Similarly the dough, which is used for making bread, is fermented using baker's yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*). A number of traditional drinks and foods are also made by fermentation by the microbes. 'Toddy', a traditional drink of some parts of southern India is made by fermenting sap from palms. Microbes are also used to ferment fish, soyabean and bamboo-shoots to make foods. Cheese, is one of the oldest food items in which microbes were used. Different varieties of cheese are known by their characteristic texture, flavour and taste, the specificity coming from the microbes used. For example, the large holes in 'Swiss cheese' are due to production of a large amount of CO_2 by a bacterium named *Propionibacterium sharmanii.* The 'Roquefort cheese' are ripened by growing a specific fungi on them, which gives them a particular flavour.

8.2 Microbes in Industrial Products

Even in industry, microbes are used to synthesise a number of products valuable to human beings. Beverages and antibiotics are some examples. Production on an industrial scale, requires growing microbes in very large vessels called **fermentors** (Figure 8.4).

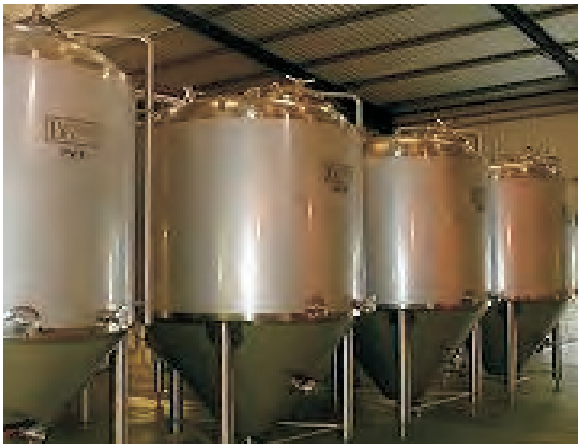


Figure 8.4 Fermentors

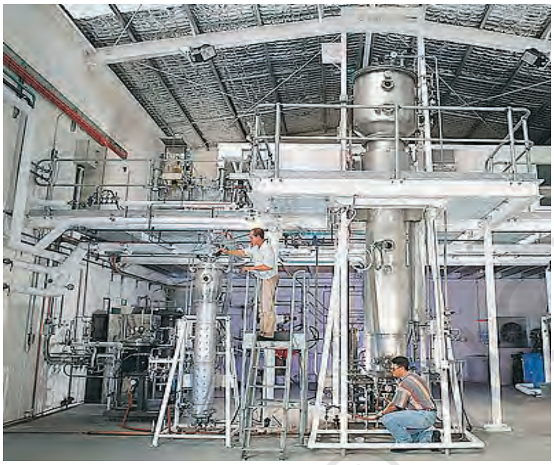


Figure 8.5 Fermentation Plant

8.2.1 Fermented Beverages

Microbes especially yeasts have been used from time immemorial for the production of beverages like wine, beer, whisky, brandy or rum. For this purpose the same yeast *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* used for bread-making and commonly called brewer's yeast, is used for fermenting malted cereals and fruit juices, to produce ethanol. *Do you recollect the metabolic reactions, which result in the production of ethanol by yeast?* Depending on the type of the raw material used for fermentation and the type of processing (with or without distillation) different types of alcoholic drinks are obtained. Wine and beer are produced without distillation whereas whisky, brandy and rum are produced by distillation of the fermented broth. The photograph of a fermentation plant is shown in Figure 8.5.

8.2.2 Antibiotics

Antibiotics produced by microbes are regarded as one of the most significant discoveries of the twentieth century and have greatly contributed towards the welfare of the human society. *Anti* is a Greek word that means 'against', and *bio* means 'life', together they mean 'against life' (in the context of disease causing organisms); whereas with reference to human beings, they are 'pro life' and not against. Antibiotics are chemical substances, which are produced by some microbes and can kill or retard the growth of other (disease-causing) microbes.

You are familiar with the commonly used antibiotic Penicillin. Do you know that Penicillin was the first antibiotic to be discovered, and it was a chance discovery? Alexander Fleming while working on *Staphylococci* bacteria, once observed a mould growing in one of his unwashed culture plates around which *Staphylococci* could not grow. He found out that it was due to a chemical produced by the mould and he named it Penicillin after the mould *Penicillium notatum.* However, its full potential as an effective antibiotic was established much later by Ernest Chain and Howard Florey. This antibiotic was extensively used to treat American soldiers wounded in World War II. Fleming, Chain and Florey were awarded the Nobel Prize in 1945, for this discovery.

After Penicillin, other antibiotics were also purified from other microbes. *Can you name some other antibiotics and find out their sources?* Antibiotics have greatly improved our capacity to treat deadly diseases such as plague, whooping cough (*kali khansi*), diphtheria (*gal ghotu*) and leprosy (*kusht rog*), which used to kill millions all over the globe. Today, we cannot imagine a world without antibiotics.

8.2.3 Chemicals, Enzymes and other Bioactive Molecules

Microbes are also used for commercial and industrial production of certain chemicals like organic acids, alcohols and enzymes. Examples of acid producers are *Aspergillus niger* (a fungus) of citric acid, *Acetobacter aceti* (a bacterium) of acetic acid; *Clostridium butylicum* (a bacterium) of butyric acid and *Lactobacillus* (a bacterium) of lactic acid.

Yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae)* is used for commercial production of ethanol. Microbes are also used for production of enzymes. Lipases are used in detergent formulations and are helpful in removing oily stains from the laundry. You must have noticed that bottled fruit juices bought from the market are clearer as compared to those made at home. This is because the bottled juices are clarified by the use of pectinases and proteases. Streptokinase produced by the bacterium *Streptococcus* and modified by genetic engineering is used as a 'clot buster' for removing clots from the blood vessels of patients who have undergone myocardial infarction leading to heart attack.

Another bioactive molecule, cyclosporin A, that is used as an immunosuppressive agent in organ-transplant patients, is produced by the fungus *Trichoderma polysporum*. Statins produced by the yeast *Monascus purpureus* have been commercialised as blood-cholesterol lowering agents. It acts by competitively inhibiting the enzyme responsible for synthesis of cholesterol.

8.3 MICROBES IN SEWAGE TREATMENT

We know that large quantities of waste water are generated everyday in cities and towns. A major component of this waste water is human excreta. This municipal waste-water is also called sewage. It contains large amounts of organic matter and microbes. Many of which are pathogenic. Have you ever wondered where this huge quantity of sewage or urban waste water is disposed off daily? This cannot be discharged into natural water bodies like rivers and streams directly – you can understand why. Before disposal, hence, sewage is treated in sewage treatment plants (STPs) to make it less polluting. Treatment of waste water is done by the

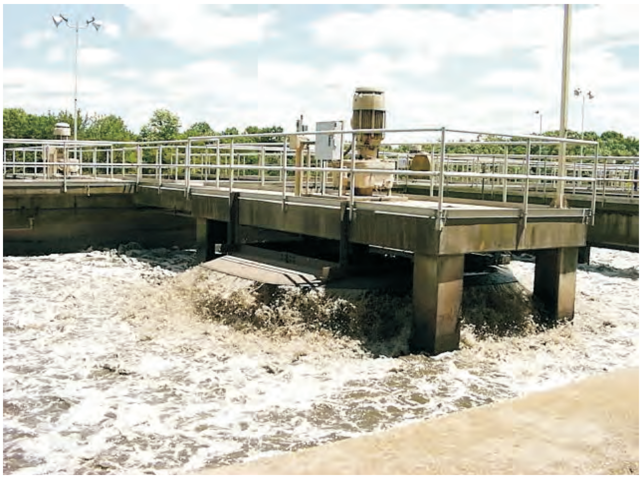


Figure 8.6 Secondary treatment

heterotrophic microbes naturally present in the sewage. This treatment is carried out in two stages:

Primary treatment : These treatment steps basically involve physical removal of particles – large and small – from the sewage through filtration and sedimentation. These are removed in stages; initially, floating debris is removed by sequential filtration. Then the grit (soil and small pebbles) are removed by sedimentation. All solids that settle form the **primary sludge**, and the supernatant forms the effluent. The effluent from the primary settling tank is taken for secondary treatment.

Secondary treatment or Biological treatment : The primary effluent is passed into large aeration tanks (Figure 8.6) where it is constantly agitated mechanically and air is pumped into it. This allows vigorous growth of useful aerobic microbes into **flocs** (masses of bacteria associated with fungal filaments to form mesh like structures). While growing, these microbes consume the major part of the organic matter in the effluent. This significantly reduces the **BOD (biochemical oxygen demand)** of the effluent. BOD refers to the amount of the oxygen that would be consumed if all the organic matter in one liter of water were oxidised by bacteria. The sewage water is treated till the BOD is reduced. The BOD test measures the rate of uptake of oxygen by micro-organisms in a sample of water and thus, indirectly, BOD is a measure of the organic matter present in the water. The greater the BOD of waste water, more is its polluting potential.

Once the BOD of sewage or waste water is reduced significantly, the effluent is then passed into a settling tank where the bacterial 'flocs' are allowed to sediment. This sediment is called **activated sludge**. A small part of the activated sludge is pumped back into the aeration tank to serve as the inoculum. The remaining major part of the sludge is pumped into large tanks called **anaerobic sludge digesters**. Here, other kinds of bacteria, which grow anaerobically, digest the bacteria and the fungi in the sludge. During this digestion, bacteria produce a mixture of gases such as methane, hydrogen sulphide and carbon dioxide. These gases form **biogas** and can be used as source of energy as it is inflammable.

The effluent from the secondary treatment plant is generally released into natural water bodies like rivers and streams. An aerial view of such a plant is shown in Figure 8.7.

Figure 8.7 An aerial view of a sewage plant

You can appreciate how microbes play a major role in treating millions of gallons of waste water everyday across the globe. This methodology has been practiced for more than a century now, in almost all parts of the world. Till date, no man-made technology has been able to rival the microbial treatment of sewage.

You are aware that due to increasing urbanisation, sewage is being produced in much larger quantities than ever before. However the number of sewage treatment plants has not increased enough to treat such large quantities. So the untreated sewage is often discharged directly into rivers leading to their pollution and increase in water-borne diseases.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests has initiated **Ganga Action Plan** and **Yamuna Action Plan** to save these major rivers of our country from pollution. Under these plans, it is proposed to build a large number of sewage treatment plants so that only treated sewage may be discharged in the rivers. A visit to a sewage treatment plant situated in any place near you would be a very interesting and educating experience.

8.4 MICROBES IN PRODUCTION OF BIOGAS

Biogas is a mixture of gases (containing predominantly methane) produced by the microbial activity and which may be used as fuel. You have learnt that microbes produce different types of gaseous end-products during growth and metabolism. The type of the gas produced depends upon the microbes and the organic substrates they utilise. In the examples cited in relation to fermentation of dough, cheese making and production of beverages, the main gas produced was CO_2. However, certain bacteria, which grow anaerobically on cellulosic material, produce large amount of methane along with CO_2 and H_2. These bacteria are collectively called **methanogens**, and one such common bacterium is *Methanobacterium*. These bacteria are commonly found in the anaerobic sludge during sewage treatment. These bacteria are also present in the rumen (a part of stomach) of cattle. A lot of cellulosic material present in the food of cattle is also present in the rumen. In rumen, these bacteria help in the breakdown of cellulose and play an important role in the nutrition of cattle. *Do you think we, human beings, are able to digest the celluose present in our foods?* Thus, the excreta (dung) of cattle, commonly called *gobar*, is rich in these bacteria. Dung can be used for generation of biogas, commonly called *gobar gas*.

The biogas plant consists of a concrete tank (10-15 feet deep) in which bio-wastes are collected and a slurry of dung is fed. A floating cover is

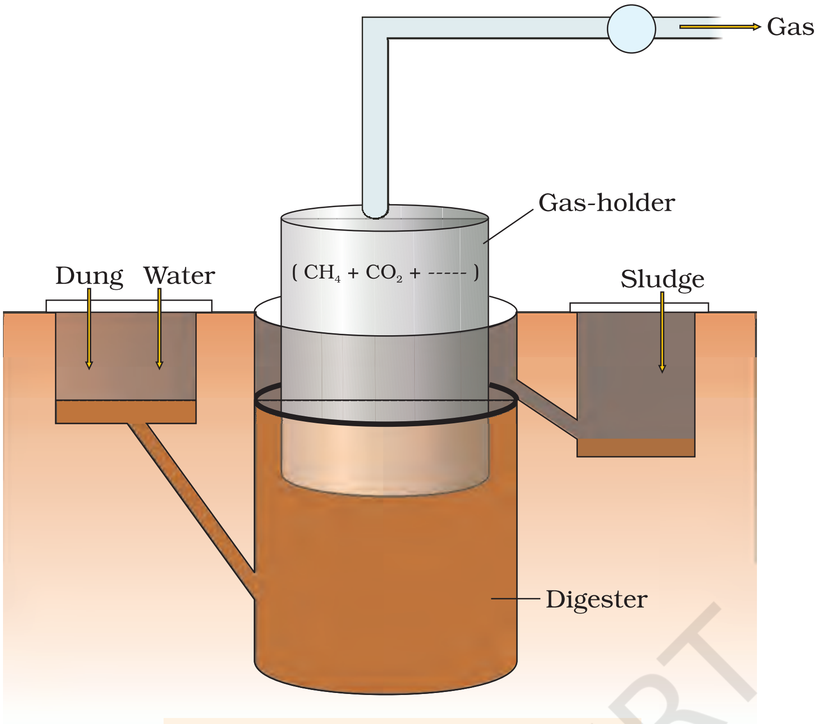


Figure 8.8 A typical biogas plant

placed over the slurry, which keeps on rising as the gas is produced in the tank due to the microbial activity. The biogas plant has an outlet, which is connected to a pipe to supply biogas to nearby houses. The spent slurry is removed through another outlet and may be used as fertiliser. Cattle dung is available in large quantities in rural areas where cattle are used for a variety of purposes. So biogas plants are more often built in rural areas. The biogas thus produced is used for cooking and lighting. The picture of a biogas plant is shown in Figure 8.8. The technology of biogas production was developed in India mainly due to the efforts of Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) and Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC). If your school is situated in a village or near a village, it would be very interesting to enquire if there are any biogas plants nearby. Visit the biogas plant and learn more about it from the people who are actually managing it.

8.5 MICROBES AS BIOCONTROL AGENTS

Biocontrol refers to the use of biological methods for controlling plant diseases and pests. In modern society, these problems have been tackled increasingly by the use of chemicals – by use of insecticides and pesticides. These chemicals are toxic and extremely harmful, to human beings and animals alike, and have been polluting our environment (soil, ground water), fruits, vegetables and crop plants. Our soil is also polluted through our use of weedicides to remove weeds.

Biological control of pests and diseases: In agriculture, there is a method of controlling pests that relies on natural predation rather than introduced chemicals. A key belief of the organic farmer is that biodiversity furthers health. The more variety a landscape has, the more sustainable it is. The organic farmer, therefore, works to create a system where the insects that are sometimes called pests are not eradicated, but instead are kept at manageable levels by a complex system of checks and balances within a living and vibrant ecosystem. Contrary to the 'conventional' farming practices which often use chemical methods to kill both useful and harmful life forms indiscriminately, this is a holistic approach that seeks to develop an understanding of the webs of interaction between the myriad of organisms that constitute the field fauna and flora. The organic farmer holds the view that the eradication of the creatures that are often described as pests is not only possible, but also undesirable, for without them the beneficial predatory and parasitic insects which depend upon them as food or hosts would not be able to survive. Thus, the use of biocontrol measures will greatly reduce our dependence on toxic chemicals and pesticides. An important part of the biological farming approach is to become familiar with the various life forms that inhabit the field, predators as well as pests, and also their life cycles, patterns of feeding and the habitats that they prefer. This will help develop appropriate means of biocontrol.

The very familiar beetle with red and black markings – the Ladybird, and Dragonflies are useful to get rid of aphids and mosquitoes, respectively. An example of microbial biocontrol agents that can be introduced in order to control butterfly caterpillars is the bacteria *Bacillus thuringiensis* (often written as *Bt*). These are available in sachets as dried spores which are mixed with water and sprayed onto vulnerable plants such as brassicas and fruit trees, where these are eaten by the insect larvae. In the gut of the larvae, the toxin is released and the larvae get killed. The bacterial disease will kill the caterpillars, but leave other insects unharmed. Because of the development of methods of genetic engineering in the last decade or so, the scientists have introduced *B. thuringiensis* toxin genes into plants. Such plants are resistant to attack by insect pests. **Bt-cotton** is one such example, which is being cultivated in some states of our country. You will learn more about this in chapter 10.

A biological control being developed for use in the treatment of plant disease is the fungus *Trichoderma. Trichoderma* species are free-living fungi that are very common in the root ecosystems. They are effective biocontrol agents of several plant pathogens.

Baculoviruses are pathogens that attack insects and other arthropods. The majority of baculoviruses used as biological control agents are in the genus *Nucleopolyhedrovirus.* These viruses are excellent candidates for species-specific, narrow spectrum insecticidal applications. They have been shown to have no negative impacts on plants, mammals, birds, fish or even on non-target insects. This is especially desirable when beneficial insects are being conserved to aid in an overall integrated pest management (IPM) programme, or when an ecologically sensitive area is being treated.

8.6 MICROBES AS BIOFERTILISERS

With our present day life styles environmental pollution is a major cause of concern. The use of the chemical fertilisers to meet the ever-increasing demand of agricultural produce has contributed significantly to this pollution. Of course, we have now realised that there are problems associated with the overuse of chemical fertilisers and there is a large pressure to switch to **organic farming** – the use of **biofertilisers**. Biofertilisers are organisms that enrich the nutrient quality of the soil. The main sources of biofertilisers are bacteria, fungi and cyanobacteria. You have studied about the nodules on the roots of leguminous plants formed by the symbiotic association of *Rhizobium*. These bacteria fix atmospheric nitrogen into organic forms, which is used by the plant as nutrient. Other bacteria can fix atmospheric nitrogen while free-living in the soil (examples *Azospirillum* and *Azotobacter*), thus enriching the nitrogen content of the soil.

Fungi are also known to form symbiotic associations with plants (**mycorrhiza**). Many members of the genus *Glomus* form mycorrhiza. The fungal symbiont in these associations absorbs phosphorus from soil and passes it to the plant. Plants having such associations show other benefits also, such as resistance to root-borne pathogens, tolerance to salinity and drought, and an overall increase in plant growth and development. *Can you tell what advantage the fungus derives from this association?*

Cyanobacteria are autotrophic microbes widely distributed in aquatic and terrestrial environments many of which can fix atmospheric nitrogen, e.g. *Anabaena, Nostoc, Oscillatoria,* etc. In paddy fields, cyanobacteria serve as an important biofertiliser. Blue green algae also add organic matter to the soil and increase its fertility. Currently, in our country, a number of biofertilisers are available commercially in the market and farmers use these regularly in their fields to replenish soil nutrients and to reduce dependence on chemical fertilisers.

SUMMARY

Microbes are a very important component of life on earth. Not all microbes are pathogenic. Many microbes are very useful to human beings. We use microbes and microbially derived products almost every day. Bacteria called lactic acid bacteria (LAB) grow in milk to convert it into curd. The dough, which is used to make bread, is fermented by yeast called *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. Certain dishes such as *idli* and *dosa*, are made from dough fermented by microbes. Bacteria and fungi are used to impart particular texture, taste and flavor to cheese. Microbes are used to produce industrial products like lactic acid, acetic acid and alcohol, which are used in a variety of processes in the industry. Antibiotics like penicillins produced by useful microbes are used to kill disease-causing harmful microbes. Antibiotics have played a major role in controlling infectious diseases like diphtheria, whooping cough and

pneumonia. For more than a hundred years, microbes are being used to treat sewage (waste water) by the process of activated sludge formation and this helps in recycling of water in nature. Methanogens produce methane (biogas) while degrading plant waste. Biogas produced by microbes is used as a source of energy in rural areas. Microbes can also be used to kill harmful pests, a process called as biocontrol. The biocontrol measures help us to avoid heavy use of toxic pesticides for controlling pests. There is a need these days to push for use of biofertilisers in place of chemical fertilisers. It is clear from the diverse uses human beings have put microbes to that they play an important role in the welfare of human society.

EXERCISES

1. Bacteria cannot be seen with the naked eyes, but these can be seen with the help of a microscope. If you have to carry a sample from your home to your biology laboratory to demonstrate the presence of microbes with the help of a microscope, which sample would you carry and why?
2. Give examples to prove that microbes release gases during metabolism.
3. In which food would you find lactic acid bacteria? Mention some of their useful applications.
4. Name some traditional Indian foods made of wheat, rice and Bengal gram (or their products) which involve use of microbes.
5. In which way have microbes played a major role in controlling diseases caused by harmful bacteria?
6. Name any two species of fungus, which are used in the production of the antibiotics.
7. What is sewage? In which way can sewage be harmful to us?
8. What is the key difference between primary and secondary sewage treatment?
9. Do you think microbes can also be used as source of energy? If yes, how?
10. Microbes can be used to decrease the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides. Explain how this can be accomplished.
11. Three water samples namely river water, untreated sewage water and secondary effluent discharged from a sewage treatment plant were subjected to BOD test. The samples were labelled A, B and C; but the laboratory attendant did not note which was which. The BOD values of the three samples A, B and C were recorded as 20mg/L, 8mg/L and 400mg/L, respectively. Which sample of the water is most polluted? Can you assign the correct label to each assuming the river water is relatively clean?

12. Find out the name of the microbes from which Cyclosporin A (an immunosuppressive drug) and Statins (blood cholesterol lowering agents) are obtained.
13. Find out the role of microbes in the following and discuss it with your teacher.

    (a) Single cell protein (SCP)

    (b) Soil
14. Arrange the following in the decreasing order (most important first) of their importance, for the welfare of human society. Give reasons for your answer.

    Biogas, Citric acid, Penicillin and Curd
15. How do biofertilisers enrich the fertility of the soil?

UNIT IX

BIOTECHNOLOGY

Chapter 9
Biotechnology : Principles and Processes

Chapter 10
Biotechnology and Its Applications

Ever since the days of Rene Descartes, the French philosopher, mathematician and biologist of seventeenth century, all human knowledge especially natural sciences were directed to develop technologies which add to the creature comforts of human lives, as also value to human life. The whole approach to understanding natural phenomena became anthropocentric. Physics and chemistry gave rise to engineering, technologies and industries which all worked for human comfort and welfare. The major utility of the biological world is as a source of food. Biotechnology, the twentieth century off-shoot of modern biology, changed our daily life as its products brought qualitative improvement in health and food production. The basic principles underlying biotechnological processes and some applications are highlighted and discussed in this unit.

HERBERT BOYER
(1936)

Herbert Boyer was born in 1936 and brought up in a corner of western Pennsylvania where railroads and mines were the destiny of most young men. He completed graduate work at the University of Pittsburgh, in 1963, followed by three years of post-graduate studies at Yale.

In 1966, Boyer took over assistant professorship at the University of California at San Francisco. By 1969, he performed studies on a couple of restriction enzymes of the *E. coli* bacterium with especially useful properties. Boyer observed that these enzymes have the capability of cutting DNA strands in a particular fashion, which left what has became known as 'sticky ends' on the strands. These clipped ends made pasting together pieces of DNA a precise exercise.

This discovery, in turn, led to a rich and rewarding conversation in Hawaii with a Stanford scientist named Stanley Cohen. Cohen had been studying small ringlets of DNA called plasmids and which float about freely in the cytoplasm of certain bacterial cells and replicate independently from the coding strand of DNA. Cohen had developed a method of removing these plasmids from the cell and then reinserting them in other cells. Combining this process with that of DNA splicing enabled Boyer and Cohen to recombine segments of DNA in desired configurations and insert the DNA in bacterial cells, which could then act as manufacturing plants for specific proteins. This breakthrough was the basis upon which the discipline of biotechnology was founded.

amp^R
tet^R
pBR322
ori
rop

12083CH11

CHAPTER 9

BIOTECHNOLOGY : PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES

9.1 Principles of Biotechnology

9.2 Tools of Recombinant DNA Technology

9.3 Processes of Recombinant DNA Technology

Biotechnology deals with techniques of using live organisms or enzymes from organisms to produce products and processes useful to humans. In this sense, making curd, bread or wine, which are all microbe-mediated processes, could also be thought as a form of biotechnology. However, it is used in a restricted sense today, to refer to such of those processes which use genetically modified organisms to achieve the same on a larger scale. Further, many other processes/techniques are also included under biotechnology. For example, *in vitro* fertilisation leading to a 'test-tube' baby, synthesising a gene and using it, developing a DNA vaccine or correcting a defective gene, are all part of biotechnology.

The European Federation of Biotechnology (EFB) has given a definition of biotechnology that encompasses both traditional view and modern molecular biotechnology. The definition given by EFB is as follows:

'The integration of natural science and organisms, cells, parts thereof, and molecular analogues for products and services'.

9.1 PRINCIPLES OF BIOTECHNOLOGY

Among many, the two core techniques that enabled birth of modern biotechnology are :

(i) ***Genetic engineering :*** Techniques to alter the chemistry of genetic material (DNA and RNA), to introduce these into host organisms and thus change the phenotype of the host organism.

(ii) ***Bioprocess engineering****:* Maintenance of sterile (microbial contamination-free) ambience in chemical engineering processes to enable growth of only the desired microbe/eukaryotic cell in large quantities for the manufacture of biotechnological products like antibiotics, vaccines, enzymes, etc.

Let us now understand the conceptual development of the principles of genetic engineering.

You probably appreciate the advantages of sexual reproduction over asexual reproduction. The former provides opportunities for variations and formulation of unique combinations of genetic setup, some of which may be beneficial to the organism as well as the population. Asexual reproduction preserves the genetic information, while sexual reproduction permits variation. Traditional hybridisation procedures used in plant and animal breeding, very often lead to inclusion and multiplication of undesirable genes along with the desired genes. The techniques of genetic engineering which include creation of **recombinant DNA**, use of **gene cloning** and **gene transfer**, overcome this limitation and allows us to isolate and introduce only one or a set of desirable genes without introducing undesirable genes into the target organism.

Do you know the likely fate of a piece of DNA, which is somehow transferred into an alien organism? Most likely, this piece of DNA would not be able to multiply itself in the progeny cells of the organism. But, when it gets integrated into the genome of the recipient, it may multiply and be inherited along with the host DNA. This is because the alien piece of DNA has become part of a chromosome, which has the ability to replicate. In a chromosome there is a specific DNA sequence called the **origin of replication,** which is responsible for initiating replication. Therefore, for the multiplication of any alien piece of DNA in an organism it needs to be a part of a chromosome(s) which has a specific sequence known as 'origin of replication'. Thus, an alien DNA is linked with the origin of replication, so that, this alien piece of DNA can replicate and multiply itself in the host organism. This can also be called as **cloning** or making multiple identical copies of any template DNA.

Let us now focus on the first instance of the construction of an artificial recombinant DNA molecule. The construction of the first recombinant DNA emerged from the possibility of linking a gene encoding antibiotic resistance with a native **plasmid** (autonomously replicating circular extra-chromosomal DNA) of *Salmonella typhimurium*. Stanley Cohen and Herbert Boyer accomplished this in 1972 by isolating the antibiotic resistance gene by cutting out a piece of DNA from a plasmid which was responsible for conferring antibiotic resistance. The cutting of DNA at specific locations became possible with the discovery of the so-called 'molecular scissors'– **restriction enzymes**. The cut piece of DNA was then linked with the plasmid DNA. These plasmid DNA act as **vectors** to transfer the piece of DNA attached to it. You probably know that mosquito acts as an insect vector to transfer the malarial parasite into human body. In the same way, a plasmid can be used as vector to deliver an alien piece of DNA into the host organism. The linking of antibiotic resistance gene with the plasmid vector became possible with the enzyme DNA ligase, which acts on cut DNA molecules and joins their ends. This makes a new combination of circular autonomously replicating DNA created *in vitro* and is known as recombinant DNA. When this DNA is transferred into *Escherichia coli*, a bacterium closely related to *Salmonella*, it could replicate using the new host's DNA polymerase enzyme and make multiple copies. The ability to multiply copies of antibiotic resistance gene in *E. coli* was called **cloning** of antibiotic resistance gene in *E. coli.*

You can hence infer that there are three basic steps in genetically modifying an organism —

(i) identification of DNA with desirable genes;
(ii) introduction of the identified DNA into the host;
(iii) maintenance of introduced DNA in the host and transfer of the DNA to its progeny.

9.2 TOOLS OF RECOMBINANT DNA TECHNOLOGY

Now we know from the foregoing discussion that genetic engineering or recombinant DNA technology can be accomplished only if we have the key tools, i.e., restriction enzymes, polymerase enzymes, ligases, vectors and the host organism. Let us try to understand some of these in detail.

9.2.1 Restriction Enzymes

In the year 1963, the two enzymes responsible for restricting the growth of bacteriophage in *Escherichia coli* were isolated. One of these added methyl groups to DNA, while the other cut DNA. The later was called **restriction endonuclease**.

The first restriction endonuclease–*Hind II*, whose functioning depended on a specific DNA nucleotide sequence was isolated and characterised five years later. It was found that *Hind II* always cut DNA molecules at a particular point by recognising a specific sequence of six base pairs. This specific base sequence is known as the **recognition sequence** for *Hind II*. Besides *Hind II*, today we know more than 900 restriction enzymes that have been isolated from over 230 strains of bacteria each of which recognise different recognition sequences.

The convention for naming these enzymes is the first letter of the name comes from the genus and the second two letters come from the species of the prokaryotic cell from which they were isolated, e.g., EcoRI comes from *Escherichia coli* RY 13. In EcoRI, the letter 'R' is derived from the name of strain. Roman numbers following the names indicate the order in which the enzymes were isolated from that strain of bacteria.

Restriction enzymes belong to a larger class of enzymes called **nucleases**. These are of two kinds; **exonucleases** and **endonucleases**. Exonucleases remove nucleotides from the ends of the DNA whereas, endonucleases make cuts at specific positions within the DNA.

Each restriction endonuclease functions by 'inspecting' the length of a DNA sequence. Once it finds its specific recognition sequence, it will bind to the DNA and cut each of the two strands of the double helix at specific points in their sugar-phosphate backbones (Figure 9.1). Each restriction endonuclease recognises a specific **palindromic nucleotide sequences** in the DNA.

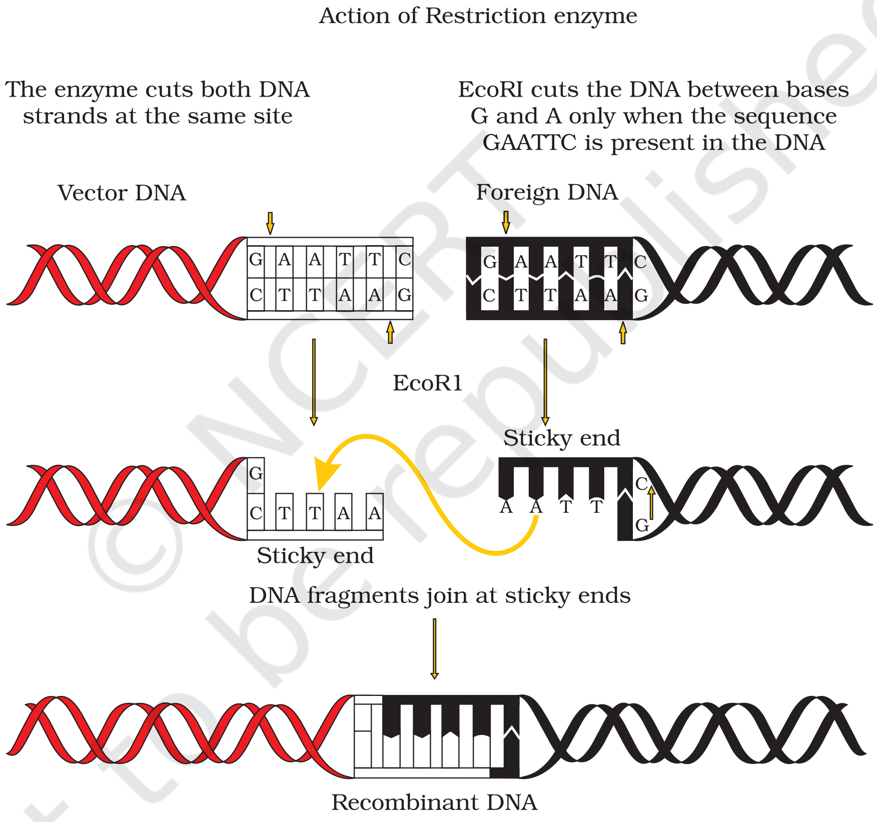

Action of Restriction enzyme
The enzyme cuts both DNA strands at the same site
EcoRI cuts the DNA between bases G and A only when the sequence GAATTC is present in the DNA
Vector DNA
Foreign DNA
G A A T T C
C T T A A G
G A A T T C
C T T A A G
EcoR1
Sticky end
G
C T T A A
Sticky end
A A T T
C
G
DNA fragments join at sticky ends
Recombinant DNA

Figure 9.1 Steps in formation of recombinant DNA by action of restriction endonuclease enzyme - EcoRI

Do you know what palindromes are? These are groups of letters that form the same words when read both forward and backward, e.g., "MALAYALAM". As against a word-palindrome where the same word is read in both directions, the palindrome in DNA is a sequence of base pairs that reads same on the two strands when orientation of reading is kept the same. For example, the following sequences reads the same on the two strands in 5′ → 3′ direction. This is also true if read in the 3′ → 5′ direction.

5′ —— GAATTC —— 3′
3′ —— CTTAAG —— 5′

Restriction enzymes cut the strand of DNA a little away from the centre of the palindrome sites, but between the same two bases on the opposite strands. This leaves single stranded portions at the ends. There are overhanging stretches called sticky ends on each strand (Figure 9.1). These are named so because they form hydrogen bonds with their complementary cut counterparts. This stickiness of the ends facilitates the action of the enzyme DNA ligase.

Restriction endonucleases are used in genetic engineering to form ‘recombinant’ molecules of DNA, which are composed of DNA from different sources/genomes.

When cut by the same restriction enzyme, the resultant DNA fragments have the same kind of ‘sticky-ends’ and, these can be joined together (end-to-end) using DNA ligases (Figure 9.2).

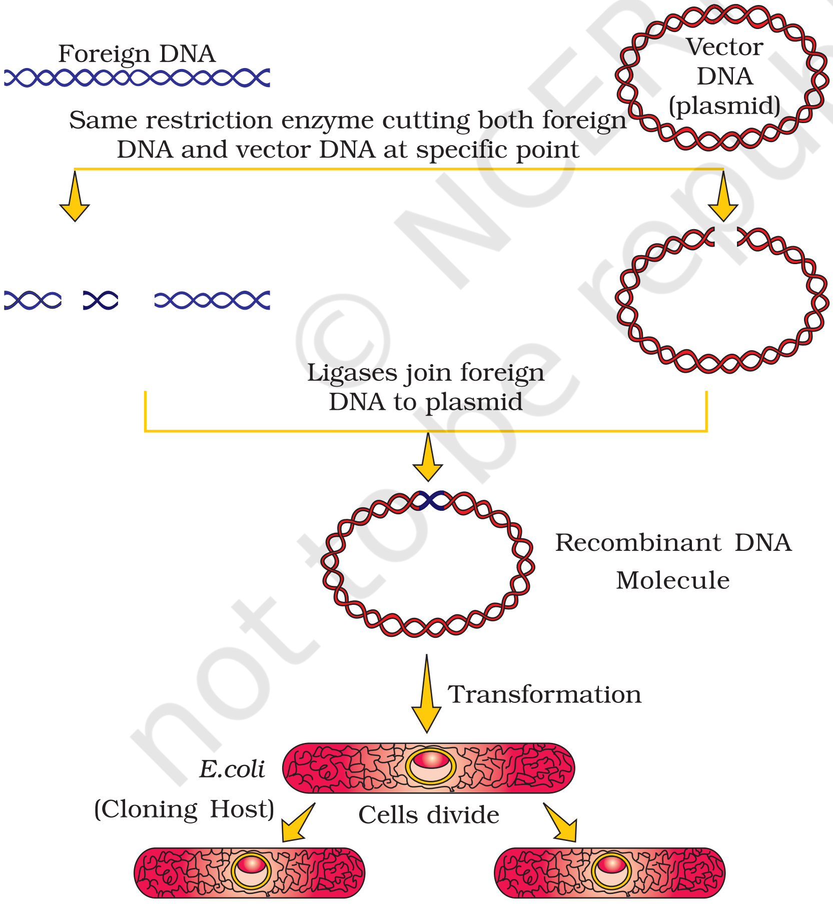

Foreign DNA
Vector DNA (plasmid)
Same restriction enzyme cutting both foreign DNA and vector DNA at specific point
Ligases join foreign DNA to plasmid
Recombinant DNA Molecule
Transformation
E.coli
(Cloning Host)
Cells divide

Figure 9.2 Diagrammatic representation of recombinant DNA technology

You may have realised that normally, unless one cuts the vector and the source DNA with the same restriction enzyme, the recombinant vector molecule cannot be created.

Separation and isolation of DNA fragments : The cutting of DNA by restriction endonucleases results in the fragments of DNA. These fragments can be separated by a technique known as **gel electrophoresis**. Since DNA fragments are negatively charged molecules they can be separated by forcing them to move towards the anode under an electric field through a medium/matrix. Nowadays the most commonly used matrix is agarose which is a natural polymer extracted from sea weeds. The DNA fragments separate (resolve) according to their size through sieving effect provided by the agarose gel. Hence, the smaller the fragment size, the farther it moves. *Look at the Figure 9.3 and guess at which end of the gel the sample was loaded.*

The separated DNA fragments can be visualised only after staining the DNA with a compound known as ethidium bromide followed by exposure to UV radiation (you cannot see pure DNA fragments in the visible light and without staining). You can see bright orange coloured bands of DNA in a ethidium bromide stained gel exposed to UV light (Figure 9.3). The separated bands of DNA are cut out from the agarose gel and extracted from the gel piece. This step is known as elution. The DNA fragments purified in this way are used in constructing recombinant DNA by joining them with cloning vectors.

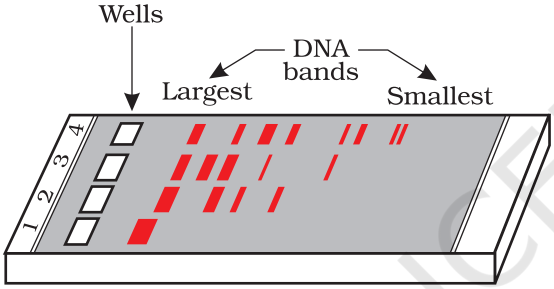


Figure 9.3 A typical agarose gel electrophoresis showing migration of undigested (lane 1) and digested set of DNA fragments (lane 2 to 4)

9.2.2 Cloning Vectors

You know that plasmids and bacteriophages have the ability to replicate within bacterial cells independent of the control of chromosomal DNA. Bacteriophages because of their high number per cell, have very high copy numbers of their genome within the bacterial cells. Some plasmids may have only one or two copies per cell whereas others may have 15-100 copies per cell. Their numbers can go even higher. If we are able to link an alien piece of DNA with bacteriophage or plasmid DNA, we can multiply its numbers equal to the copy number of the plasmid or bacteriophage. Vectors used at present, are engineered in such a way that they help easy linking of foreign DNA and selection of recombinants from non-recombinants.

The following are the features that are required to facilitate cloning into a vector.

(i) ***Origin of replication (ori) :*** This is a sequence from where replication starts and any piece of DNA when linked to this sequence can be made to replicate within the host cells. This sequence is also responsible for controlling the copy number of the linked DNA. So, if one wants to recover many copies of the target DNA it should be cloned in a vector whose origin support high copy number.

(ii) ***Selectable marker :*** In addition to 'ori', the vector requires a selectable marker, which helps in identifying and eliminating non-transformants and selectively permitting the growth of the transformants. **Transformation** is a procedure through which a piece of DNA is introduced in a host bacterium (you will study the process in subsequent section). Normally, the genes encoding resistance to antibiotics such as ampicillin, chloramphenicol, tetracycline or kanamycin, etc., are considered useful selectable markers for *E. coli.* The normal *E. coli* cells do not carry resistance against any of these antibiotics.

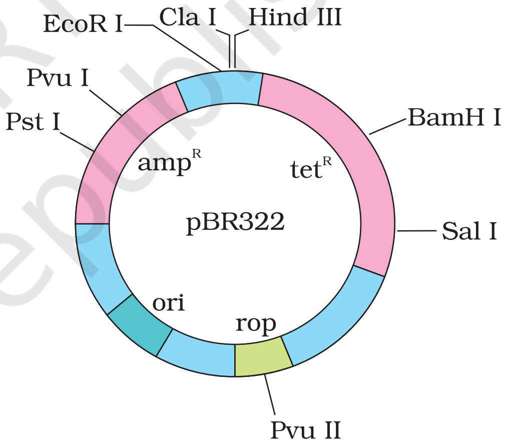


Figure 9.4 *E. coli* cloning vector pBR322 showing restriction sites (*Hind* III, *Eco*R I, *Bam*H I, *Sal* I, *Pvu* II, *Pst* I, *Cla* I), ori and antibiotic resistance genes (amp^R and tet^R). rop codes for the proteins involved in the replication of the plasmid.

(iii) ***Cloning sites:*** In order to link the alien DNA, the vector needs to have very few, preferably single, **recognition sites** for the commonly used restriction enzymes. Presence of more than one recognition sites within the vector will generate several fragments, which will complicate the gene cloning (Figure 9.4). The ligation of alien DNA is carried out at a restriction site present in one of the two **antibiotic resistance** genes. For example, you can ligate a foreign DNA at the BamH I site of tetracycline resistance gene in the vector pBR322. The recombinant plasmids will lose tetracycline resistance due to insertion of foreign DNA but can still be selected out from non-recombinant ones by plating the transformants on ampicillin containing medium. The transformants growing on ampicillin containing medium are then transferred on a medium containing tetracycline. The recombinants will grow in ampicillin containing medium but not on that containing tetracycline. But, non-recombinants will grow on the medium containing both the antibiotics. In this case, one antibiotic resistance gene helps in selecting the transformants, whereas the other antibiotic resistance

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gene gets 'inactivated due to insertion' of alien DNA, and helps in selection of recombinants.

Selection of recombinants due to inactivation of antibiotics is a cumbersome procedure because it requires simultaneous plating on two plates having different antibiotics. Therefore, alternative selectable markers have been developed which differentiate recombinants from non-recombinants on the basis of their ability to produce colour in the presence of a chromogenic substrate. In this, a recombinant DNA is inserted within the coding sequence of an enzyme, β-galactosidase. This results into inactivation of the gene for synthesis of this enzyme, which is referred to as **insertional inactivation**. The presence of a chromogenic substrate gives blue coloured colonies if the plasmid in the bacteria does not have an insert. Presence of insert results into insertional inactivation of the β-galactosidase gene and the colonies do not produce any colour, these are identified as recombinant colonies.

(iv) ***Vectors for cloning genes in plants and animals :*** You may be surprised to know that we have learnt the lesson of transferring genes into plants and animals from bacteria and viruses which have known this for ages – how to deliver genes to transform eukaryotic cells and force them to do what the bacteria or viruses want. For example, *Agrobacterium tumifaciens*, a pathogen of several dicot plants is able to deliver a piece of DNA known as 'T-DNA' to transform normal plant cells into a **tumor** and direct these tumor cells to produce the chemicals required by the pathogen. Similarly, retroviruses in animals have the ability to transform normal cells into **cancerous** cells. A better understanding of the art of delivering genes by pathogens in their eukaryotic hosts has generated knowledge to transform these tools of pathogens into useful vectors for delivering genes of interest to humans. The tumor inducing (Ti) plasmid of *Agrobacterium tumifaciens* has now been modified into a cloning vector which is no more pathogenic to the plants but is still able to use the mechanisms to deliver genes of our interest into a variety of plants. Similarly, retroviruses have also been disarmed and are now used to deliver desirable genes into animal cells. So, once a gene or a DNA fragment has been ligated into a suitable vector it is transferred into a bacterial, plant or animal host (where it multiplies).

9.2.3 Competent Host (For Transformation with Recombinant DNA)

Since DNA is a hydrophilic molecule, it cannot pass through cell membranes. *Why*? In order to force bacteria to take up the plasmid, the bacterial cells must first be made 'competent' to take up DNA. This is done by treating them with a specific concentration of a divalent cation, such as calcium, which increases the efficiency with which DNA enters the bacterium through pores in its cell wall. Recombinant DNA can then be forced into such cells by incubating the cells with recombinant DNA on ice, followed by placing them briefly at 42°C (heat shock), and then putting them back on ice. This enables the bacteria to take up the recombinant DNA.

This is not the only way to introduce alien DNA into host cells. In a method known as **micro-injection**, recombinant DNA is directly injected into the nucleus of an animal cell. In another method, suitable for plants, cells are bombarded with high velocity micro-particles of gold or tungsten coated with DNA in a method known as **biolistics** or **gene gun**. And the last method uses 'disarmed pathogen' vectors, which when allowed to infect the cell, transfer the recombinant DNA into the host.

Now that we have learnt about the tools for constructing recombinant DNA, let us discuss the processes facilitating recombinant DNA technology.

9.3 Processes of Recombinant DNA Technology

Recombinant DNA technology involves several steps in specific sequence such as isolation of DNA, fragmentation of DNA by restriction endonucleases, isolation of a desired DNA fragment, ligation of the DNA fragment into a vector, transferring the recombinant DNA into the host, culturing the host cells in a medium at large scale and extraction of the desired product. Let us examine each of these steps in some details.

9.3.1 Isolation of the Genetic Material (DNA)

Recall that nucleic acid is the genetic material of all organisms without exception. In majority of organisms this is deoxyribonucleic acid or DNA. In order to cut the DNA with restriction enzymes, it needs to be in pure form, free from other macro-molecules. Since the DNA is enclosed within the membranes, we have to break the cell open to release DNA along with other macromolecules such as RNA, proteins, polysaccharides and also lipids. This can be achieved by treating the bacterial cells/plant or animal tissue with enzymes such as **lysozyme** (bacteria), **cellulase** (plant cells), **chitinase** (fungus). You know that genes are located on long molecules of DNA interwined with proteins such as histones. The RNA can be removed by treatment with ribonuclease whereas proteins can be removed by treatment with protease. Other molecules can be removed by appropriate treatments and purified DNA ultimately precipitates out after the addition of chilled ethanol. This can be seen as collection of fine threads in the suspension (Figure 9.5).

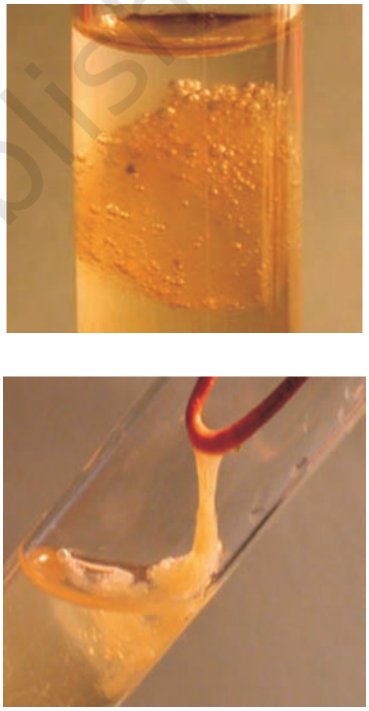


Figure 9.5 DNA that separates out can be removed by spooling

9.3.2 Cutting of DNA at Specific Locations

Restriction enzyme digestions are performed by incubating purified DNA molecules with the restriction enzyme, at the optimal conditions for that specific enzyme. Agarose gel electrophoresis is employed to check the progression of a restriction enzyme digestion. DNA is a negatively charged molecule, hence it moves towards the positive electrode (anode) (Figure 9.3). The process is repeated with the vector DNA also.

The joining of DNA involves several processes. After having cut the source DNA as well as the vector DNA with a specific restriction enzyme, the cut out 'gene of interest' from the source DNA and the cut vector with space are mixed and ligase is added. This results in the preparation of recombinant DNA.

9.3.3 Amplification of Gene of Interest using PCR

PCR stands for **Polymerase Chain Reaction**. In this reaction, multiple copies of the gene (or DNA) of interest is synthesised *in vitro* using two

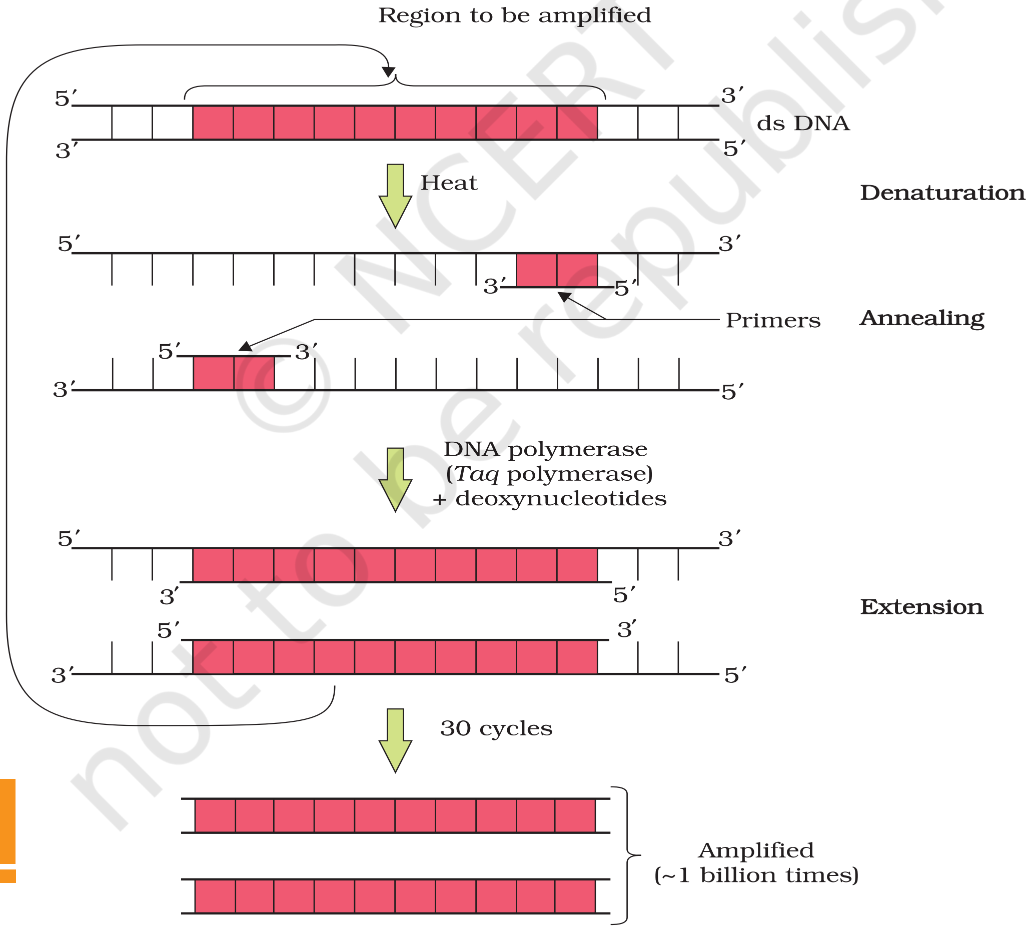

Region to be amplified
5′
3′
3′
5′
ds DNA
Heat
Denaturation
5′
3′
3′
5′
Primers
Annealing
5′
3′
3′
5′
DNA polymerase
(*Taq* polymerase)
+ deoxynucleotides
5′
3′
3′
5′
Extension
5′
3′
3′
5′
30 cycles
Amplified
(~1 billion times)

Figure 9.6 Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) : Each cycle has three steps: (i) Denaturation; (ii) Primer annealing; and (iii) Extension of primers

sets of primers (small chemically synthesised oligonucleotides that are complementary to the regions of DNA) and the enzyme DNA polymerase. The enzyme extends the primers using the nucleotides provided in the reaction and the genomic DNA as template. If the process of replication of DNA is repeated many times, the segment of DNA can be amplified to approximately billion times, i.e., 1 billion copies are made. Such repeated amplification is achieved by the use of a thermostable DNA polymerase (isolated from a bacterium, *Thermus aquaticus*), which remain active during the high temperature induced denaturation of double stranded DNA. The amplified fragment if desired can now be used to ligate with a vector for further cloning (Figure 9.6).

9.3.4 Insertion of Recombinant DNA into the Host Cell/Organism

There are several methods of introducing the ligated DNA into recipient cells. Recipient cells after making them 'competent' to receive, take up DNA present in its surrounding. So, if a recombinant DNA bearing gene for resistance to an antibiotic (e.g., ampicillin) is transferred into *E. coli* cells, the host cells become transformed into ampicillin-resistant cells. If we spread the transformed cells on agar plates containing ampicillin, only transformants will grow, untransformed recipient cells will die. Since, due to ampicillin resistance gene, one is able to select a transformed cell in the presence of ampicillin. The ampicillin resistance gene in this case is called a **selectable marker**.

9.3.5 Obtaining the Foreign Gene Product

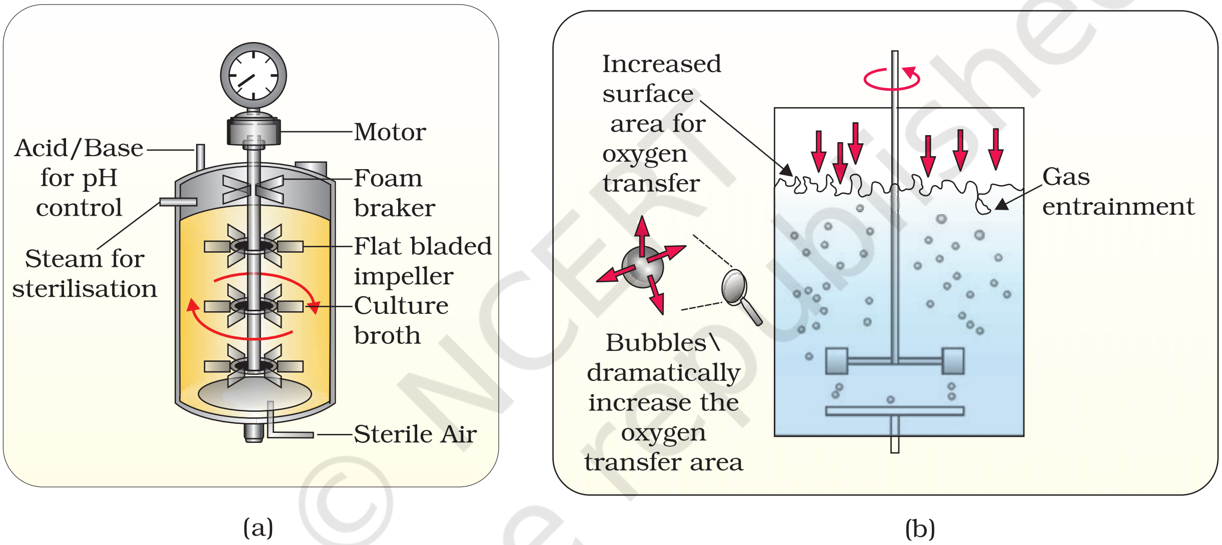
When you insert a piece of alien DNA into a cloning vector and transfer it into a bacterial, plant or animal cell, the alien DNA gets multiplied. In almost all recombinant technologies, the ultimate aim is to produce a desirable protein. Hence, there is a need for the recombinant DNA to be expressed. The foreign gene gets expressed under appropriate conditions. The expression of foreign genes in host cells involve understanding many technical details.

After having cloned the gene of interest and having optimised the conditions to induce the expression of the target protein, one has to consider producing it on a large scale. *Can you think of any reason why there is a need for large-scale production*? If any protein encoding gene is expressed in a heterologous host, it is called a **recombinant protein**. The cells harbouring cloned genes of interest may be grown on a small scale in the laboratory. The cultures may be used for extracting the desired protein and then purifying it by using different separation techniques.

The cells can also be multiplied in a continuous culture system wherein the used medium is drained out from one side while fresh medium is added from the other to maintain the cells in their physiologically most active log/exponential phase. This type of culturing method produces a larger biomass leading to higher yields of desired protein.

Small volume cultures cannot yield appreciable quantities of products. To produce in large quantities, the development of **bioreactors**, where large volumes (100-1000 litres) of culture can be processed, was required. Thus, bioreactors can be thought of as vessels in which raw materials are biologically converted into specific products, individual enzymes, etc., using microbial plant, animal or human cells. A bioreactor provides the optimal conditions for achieving the desired product by providing optimum growth conditions (temperature, pH, substrate, salts, vitamins, oxygen).

The most commonly used bioreactors are of stirring type, which are shown in Figure 9.7.


Acid/Base
for pH
control
Steam for
sterilisation
Motor
Foam
braker
Flat bladed
impeller
Culture
broth
Sterile Air
Increased
surface
area for
oxygen
transfer
Gas
entrainment
Bubbles\
dramatically
increase the
oxygen
transfer area

(a) (b)

Figure 9.7 (a) Simple stirred-tank bioreactor; (b) Sparged stirred-tank bioreactor through which sterile air bubbles are sparged

A stirred-tank reactor is usually cylindrical or with a curved base to facilitate the mixing of the reactor contents. The stirrer facilitates even mixing and oxygen availability throughout the bioreactor. Alternatively air can be bubbled through the reactor. If you look at the figure closely you will see that the bioreactor has an agitator system, an oxygen delivery system and a foam control system, a temperature control system, pH control system and sampling ports so that small volumes of the culture can be withdrawn periodically.

9.3.6 Downstream Processing

After completion of the biosynthetic stage, the product has to be subjected through a series of processes before it is ready for marketing as a finished product. The processes include separation and purification, which are collectively referred to as downstream processing. The product has to be formulated with suitable preservatives. Such formulation has to undergo thorough clinical trials as in case of drugs. Strict quality control testing for each product is also required. The downstream processing and quality control testing vary from product to product.

SUMMARY

Biotechnology deals with large scale production and marketing of products and processes using live organisms, cells or enzymes. Modern biotechnology using genetically modified organisms was made possible only when man learnt to alter the chemistry of DNA and construct recombinant DNA. This key process is called recombinant DNA technology or genetic engineering. This process involves the use of restriction endonucleases, DNA ligase, appropriate plasmid or viral vectors to isolate and ferry the foreign DNA into host organisms, expression of the foreign gene, purification of the gene product, i.e., the functional protein and finally making a suitable formulation for marketing. Large scale production involves use of bioreactors.

EXERCISES

1. Can you list 10 recombinant proteins which are used in medical practice? Find out where they are used as therapeutics (use the internet).
2. Make a chart (with diagrammatic representation) showing a restriction enzyme, the substrate DNA on which it acts, the site at which it cuts DNA and the product it produces.
3. From what you have learnt, can you tell whether enzymes are bigger or DNA is bigger in molecular size? How did you know?
4. What would be the molar concentration of human DNA in a human cell? Consult your teacher.
5. Do eukaryotic cells have restriction endonucleases? Justify your answer.
6. Besides better aeration and mixing properties, what other advantages do stirred tank bioreactors have over shake flasks?
7. Collect 5 examples of palindromic DNA sequences by consulting your teacher. Better try to create a palindromic sequence by following base-pair rules.
8. Can you recall meiosis and indicate at what stage a recombinant DNA is made?
9. Can you think and answer how a reporter enzyme can be used to monitor transformation of host cells by foreign DNA in addition to a selectable marker?

10. Describe briefly the following:
    (a) Origin of replication
    (b) Bioreactors
    (c) Downstream processing
11. Explain briefly
    (a) PCR
    (b) Restriction enzymes and DNA
    (c) Chitinase
12. Discuss with your teacher and find out how to distinguish between
    (a) Plasmid DNA and Chromosomal DNA
    (b) RNA and DNA
    (c) Exonuclease and Endonuclease

CHAPTER 10

12083CH12

BIOTECHNOLOGY AND ITS APPLICATIONS

10.1 *Biotechnological Applications in Agriculture*

10.2 *Biotechnological Applications in Medicine*

10.3 *Transgenic Animals*

10.4 *Ethical Issues*

Biotechnology, as you would have learnt from the previous chapter, essentially deals with industrial scale production of biopharmaceuticals and biologicals using genetically modified microbes, fungi, plants and animals. The applications of biotechnology include therapeutics, diagnostics, genetically modified crops for agriculture, processed food, bioremediation, waste treatment, and energy production. Three critical research areas of biotechnology are:

(i) Providing the best catalyst in the form of improved organism usually a microbe or pure enzyme.

(ii) Creating optimal conditions through engineering for a catalyst to act, and

(iii) Downstream processing technologies to purify the protein/organic compound.

Let us now learn how human beings have used biotechnology to improve the quality of human life, especially in the field of food production and health.

10.1 BIOTECHNOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS IN AGRICULTURE

Let us take a look at the three options that can be thought for increasing food production

(i) agro-chemical based agriculture;

(ii) organic agriculture; and
(iii) genetically engineered crop-based agriculture.

The **Green Revolution** succeeded in tripling the food supply but yet it was not enough to feed the growing human population. Increased yields have partly been due to the use of improved crop varieties, but mainly due to the use of better management practices and use of agrochemicals (fertilisers and pesticides). However, for farmers in the developing world, agrochemicals are often too expensive, and further increases in yield with existing varieties are not possible using conventional breeding.

As traditional breeding techniques failed to keep pace with demand and to provide sufficiently fast and efficient systems for crop improvement, another technology called **tissue culture** got developed. What does tissue culture mean? It was learnt by scientists, during 1950s, that whole plants could be regenerated from **explants,** i.e., any part of a plant taken out and grown in a test tube, under sterile conditions in special nutrient media. This capacity to generate a whole plant from any cell/explant is called **totipotency**. You will learn how to accomplish this in higher classes. It is important to stress here that the nutrient medium must provide a carbon source such as sucrose and also inorganic salts, vitamins, amino acids and growth regulators like auxins, cytokinins etc. By application of these methods it is possible to achieve propagation of a large number of plants in very short durations. This method of producing thousands of plants through tissue culture is called **micro-propagation**. Each of these plants will be genetically identical to the original plant from which they were grown, i.e., they are **somaclones**. Many important food plants like tomato, banana, apple, etc., have been produced on commercial scale using this method. Try to visit a tissue culture laboratory with your teacher to better understand and appreciate the process.

Another important application of the method is the recovery of healthy plants from diseased plants. Even if the plant is infected with a virus, the **meristem** (apical and axillary) is free of virus. Hence, one can remove the meristem and grow it *in vitro* to obtain virus-free plants. Scientists have succeeded in culturing meristems of banana, sugarcane, potato, etc.

Scientists have even isolated single cells from plants and after digesting their cell walls have been able to isolate naked protoplasts (surrounded by plasma membranes). Isolated protoplasts from two different varieties of plants – each having a desirable character – can be fused to get hybrid protoplasts, which can be further grown to form a new plant. These hybrids are called **somatic hybrids** while the process is called **somatic hybridisation**. Imagine a situation when a protoplast of tomato is fused with that of potato, and then they are grown – to form new hybrid plants combining tomato and potato characteristics. Well, this has been achieved – resulting in formation of pomato; unfortunately this plant did not have all the desired combination of characteristics for its commercial utilisation.

Is there any alternative path that our understanding of genetics can show so that farmers may obtain maximum yield from their fields? Is there a way to minimise the use of fertilisers and chemicals so that their harmful effects on the environment are reduced? Use of genetically modified crops is a possible solution.

Plants, bacteria, fungi and animals whose genes have been altered by manipulation are called **Genetically Modified Organisms** (**GMO**). GM plants have been useful in many ways. Genetic modification has:

(i) made crops more tolerant to abiotic stresses (cold, drought, salt, heat).
(ii) reduced reliance on chemical pesticides (pest-resistant crops).
(iii) helped to reduce post harvest losses.
(iv) increased efficiency of mineral usage by plants (this prevents early exhaustion of fertility of soil).
(v) enhanced nutritional value of food, e.g., golden rice, i.e., Vitamin 'A' enriched rice.

In addition to these uses, GM has been used to create tailor-made plants to supply alternative resources to industries, in the form of starches, fuels and pharmaceuticals.

Some of the applications of biotechnology in agriculture that you will study in detail are the production of pest resistant plants, which could decrease the amount of pesticide used. Bt toxin is produced by a bacterium called ***B**acillus **t**huringiensis* (**Bt** for short). Bt toxin gene has been cloned from the bacteria and been expressed in plants to provide resistance to insects without the need for insecticides; in effect created a bio-pesticide. Examples are Bt cotton, Bt corn, rice, tomato, potato and soyabean etc.

Bt Cotton: Some strains of *Bacillus thuringiensis* produce proteins that kill certain insects such as lepidopterans (tobacco budworm, armyworm), coleopterans (beetles) and dipterans (flies, mosquitoes). *B. thuringiensis* forms protein crystals during a particular phase of their growth. These crystals contain a toxic **insecticidal protein**. Why does this toxin not kill the *Bacillus*? Actually, the Bt toxin protein exist as inactive *protoxins* but once an insect ingest the inactive toxin, it is converted into an active form of toxin due to the alkaline pH of the gut which solubilise the crystals. The activated toxin binds to the surface of midgut epithelial cells and create pores that cause cell swelling and lysis and eventually cause death of the insect.

Specific Bt toxin genes were isolated from *Bacillus thuringiensis* and incorporated into the several crop plants such as cotton (Figure 10.1). The choice of genes depends upon the crop and the targeted pest, as most Bt toxins are insect-group specific. The toxin is coded by a gene *cryIAc* named **cry**. There are a number of them, for example, the proteins encoded by the genes *cryIAc* and *cryIIAb* control the cotton bollworms, that of *cryIAb* controls corn borer.

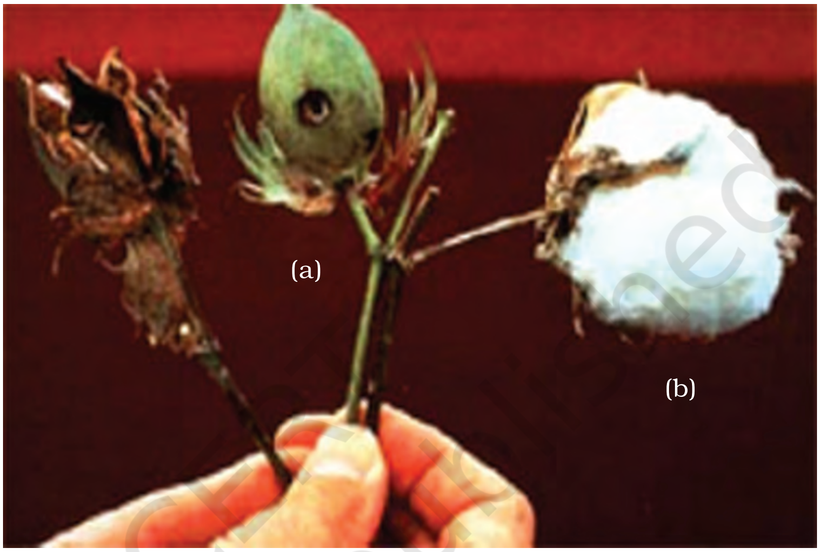


Figure 10.1 Cotton boll: (a) destroyed by bollworms; (b) a fully mature cotton boll

Pest Resistant Plants: Several nematodes parasitise a wide variety of plants and animals including human beings. A nematode *Meloidegyne incognitia* infects the roots of tobacco plants and causes a great reduction in yield. A novel strategy was adopted to prevent this infestation which was based on the process of **RNA interference** (RNAi). RNAi takes place in all eukaryotic organisms as a method of cellular defense. This method involves silencing of a specific mRNA due to a complementary dsRNA molecule that binds to and prevents translation of the mRNA (silencing). The source of this complementary RNA could be from an infection by viruses having RNA genomes or mobile genetic elements (transposons) that replicate via an RNA intermediate.

Using *Agrobacterium* vectors, nematode-specific genes were introduced into the host plant (Figure 10.2). The introduction of DNA was such that it produced both sense and anti-sense RNA in the host cells. These two RNA's being complementary to each other formed a double stranded (dsRNA) that initiated RNAi and thus, silenced the specific mRNA of the nematode. The consequence was that the parasite could not survive in a transgenic host expressing specific interfering RNA. The transgenic plant therefore got itself protected from the parasite (Figure 10.2).

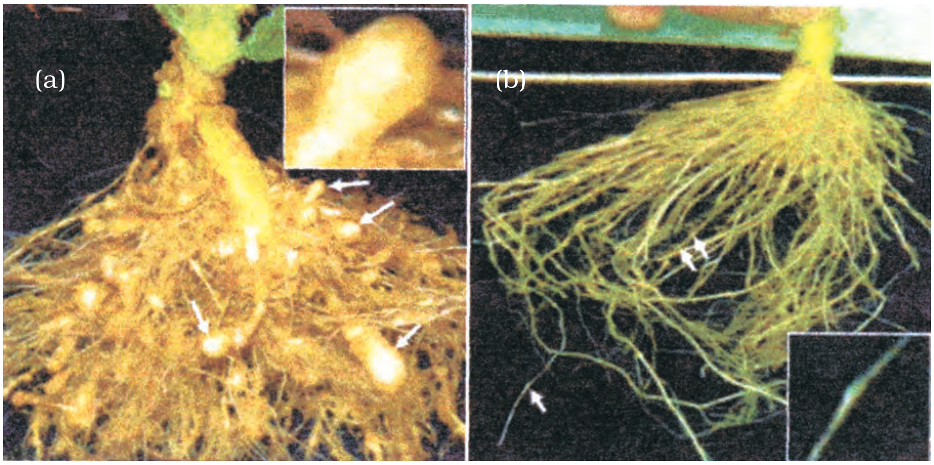


Figure 10.2 Host plant-generated dsRNA triggers protection against nematode infestation: (a) Roots of a typical control plants; (b) transgenic plant roots 5 days after deliberate infection of nematode but protected through novel mechanism.

10.2 BIOTECHNOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS IN MEDICINE

The recombinant DNA technological processes have made immense impact in the area of healthcare by enabling mass production of safe and more effective therapeutic drugs. Further, the recombinant therapeutics do not induce unwanted immunological responses as is common in case of similar products isolated from non-human sources. At present, about 30 recombinant therapeutics have been approved for human-use the world over. In India, 12 of these are presently being marketed.

10.2.1 Genetically Engineered Insulin

Management of adult-onset diabetes is possible by taking insulin at regular time intervals. *What would a diabetic patient do if enough human-insulin was not available*? If you discuss this, you would soon realise that one would have to isolate and use insulin from other animals. *Would the insulin isolated from other animals be just as effective as that secreted by the human body itself and would it not elicit an immune response in the human body*? Now, imagine if bacterium were available that could make human insulin. Suddenly the whole process becomes so simple. You can easily grow a large quantity of the bacteria and make as much insulin as you need.

Think about whether insulin can be orally administered to diabetic people or not. Why?

Insulin used for diabetes was earlier extracted from pancreas of slaughtered cattle and pigs. Insulin from an animal source, though caused some patients to develop allergy or other types of reactions to the foreign protein. Insulin consists of two short polypeptide chains: chain A and chain B, that are linked together by disulphide bridges (Figure 10.3).

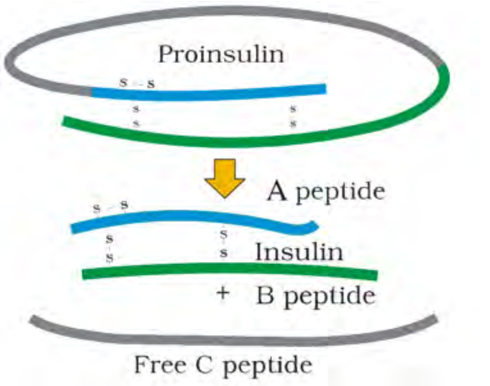


Figure 10.3 Maturation of pro-insulin into insulin (simplified)

In mammals, including humans, insulin is synthesised as a pro-hormone (like a pro-enzyme, the pro-hormone also needs to be processed before it becomes a fully mature and functional hormone) which contains an extra stretch called the **C peptide**. This C peptide is not present in the mature insulin and is removed during maturation into insulin.The main challenge for production of insulin using rDNA techniques was getting insulin assembled into a mature form. In 1983, Eli Lilly an American company prepared two DNA sequences corresponding to A and B, chains of human insulin and introduced them in plasmids of *E. coli* to produce insulin chains. Chains A and B were produced separately, extracted and combined by creating disulfide bonds to form human insulin.

10.2.2 Gene Therapy

If a person is born with a hereditary disease, can a corrective therapy be taken for such a disease? Gene therapy is an attempt to do this. Gene therapy is a collection of methods that allows correction of a gene defect that has been diagnosed in a child/embryo. Here genes are inserted into a person's cells and tissues to treat a disease. Correction of a genetic defect involves delivery of a normal gene into the individual or embryo to take over the function of and compensate for the non-functional gene.

The first clinical gene therapy was given in 1990 to a 4-year old girl with adenosine deaminase (ADA) deficiency. This enzyme is crucial for the immune system to function. The disorder is caused due to the deletion of the gene for adenosine deaminase. In some children ADA deficiency can be cured by bone marrow transplantation; in others it can be treated by enzyme replacement therapy, in which functional ADA is given to the patient by injection. But the problem with both of these approaches that they are not completely curative. As a first step towards gene therapy, lymphocytes from the blood of the patient are grown in a culture outside the body. A functional ADA cDNA (using a retroviral vector) is then introduced into these lymphocytes, which are subsequently returned to the patient. However, as these cells are not immortal, the patient requires periodic infusion of such genetically engineered lymphocytes. However, if the gene isolate from marrow cells producing ADA is introduced into cells at early embryonic stages, it could be a permanent cure.

10.2.3 Molecular Diagnosis

You know that for effective treatment of a disease, early diagnosis and understanding its pathophysiology is very important. Using conventional methods of diagnosis (serum and urine analysis, etc.) early detection is not possible. Recombinant DNA technology, Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) and Enzyme Linked Immuno-sorbent Assay (ELISA) are some of the techniques that serve the purpose of early diagnosis.

Presence of a pathogen (bacteria, viruses, etc.) is normally suspected only when the pathogen has produced a disease symptom. By this time the concentration of pathogen is already very high in the body. However, very low concentration of a bacteria or virus (at a time when the symptoms of the disease are not yet visible) can be detected by amplification of their nucleic acid by PCR. *Can you explain how PCR can detect very low amounts of DNA?* PCR is now routinely used to detect HIV in suspected AIDS patients. It is being used to detect mutations in genes in suspected cancer patients too. It is a powerful techqnique to identify many other genetic disorders.

A single stranded DNA or RNA, tagged with a radioactive molecule (probe) is allowed to hybridise to its complementary DNA in a clone of cells followed by detection using autoradiography. The clone having the mutated gene will hence not appear on the photographic film, because the probe will not have complementarity with the mutated gene.

ELISA is based on the principle of antigen-antibody interaction. Infection by pathogen can be detected by the presence of antigens (proteins, glycoproteins, etc.) or by detecting the antibodies synthesised against the pathogen.

10.3 TRANSGENIC ANIMALS

Animals that have had their DNA manipulated to possess and express an extra (foreign) gene are known as **transgenic animals**. Transgenic rats, rabbits, pigs, sheep, cows and fish have been produced, although over 95 per cent of all existing transgenic animals are mice. *Why are these animals being produced? How can man benefit from such modifications*? Let us try and explore some of the common reasons:

(i) ***Normal physiology and development:*** Transgenic animals can be specifically designed to allow the study of how genes are regulated, and how they affect the normal functions of the body and its development, e.g., study of complex factors involved in growth such as insulin-like growth factor. By introducing genes from other species that alter the formation of this factor and studying the biological effects that result, information is obtained about the biological role of the factor in the body.

(ii) ***Study of disease:*** Many transgenic animals are designed to increase our understanding of how genes contribute to the development of disease. These are specially made to serve as models for human diseases so that investigation of new treatments for diseases is made possible. Today transgenic models exist for many human diseases such as cancer, cystic fibrosis, rheumatoid arthritis and Alzheimer's.

(iii) ***Biological products:*** Medicines required to treat certain human diseases can contain biological products, but such products are often expensive to make. Transgenic animals that produce useful biological products can be created by the introduction of the portion of DNA (or genes) which codes for a particular product such as human protein (α-1-antitrypsin) used to treat emphysema. Similar attempts are being made for treatment of phenylketonuria (PKU) and cystic fibrosis. In 1997, the first transgenic cow, Rosie, produced human protein-enriched milk (2.4 grams per litre). The milk contained the human alpha-lactalbumin and was nutritionally a more balanced product for human babies than natural cow-milk.

(iv) ***Vaccine safety:*** Transgenic mice are being developed for use in testing the safety of vaccines before they are used on humans. Transgenic mice are being used to test the safety of the polio vaccine. If successful and found to be reliable, they could replace the use of monkeys to test the safety of batches of the vaccine.

(v) ***Chemical safety testing:*** This is known as toxicity/safety testing. The procedure is the same as that used for testing toxicity of drugs. Transgenic animals are made that carry genes which make them more sensitive to toxic substances than non-transgenic animals. They are then exposed to the toxic substances and the effects studied. Toxicity testing in such animals will allow us to obtain results in less time.

10.4 ETHICAL ISSUES

The manipulation of living organisms by the human race cannot go on any further, without regulation. Some ethical standards are required to evaluate the morality of all human activities that might help or harm living organisms.

Going beyond the morality of such issues, the biological significance of such things is also important. Genetic modification of organisms can have unpredicatable results when such organisms are introduced into the ecosystem.

Therefore, the Indian Government has set up organisations such as **GEAC** (Genetic Engineering Approval Committee), which will make decisions regarding the validity of GM research and the safety of introducing GM-organisms for public services.

The modification/usage of living organisms for public services (as food and medicine sources, for example) has also created problems with patents granted for the same.

There is growing public anger that certain companies are being granted patents for products and technologies that make use of the genetic materials, plants and other biological resources that have long been identified, developed and used by farmers and indigenous people of a specific region/country.

Rice is an important food grain, the presence of which goes back thousands of years in Asia's agricultural history. There are an estimated 200,000 varieties of rice in India alone. The diversity of rice in India is one of the richest in the world. Basmati rice is distinct for its unique aroma and flavour and 27 documented varieties of Basmati are grown in India. There is reference to Basmati in ancient texts, folklore and poetry, as it has been grown for centuries. In 1997, an American company got patent rights on Basmati rice through the US Patent and Trademark Office. This allowed the company to sell a 'new' variety of Basmati, in the US and abroad. This 'new' variety of Basmati had actually been derived from Indian farmer's varieties. Indian Basmati was crossed with semi-dwarf varieties and claimed as an invention or a novelty. The patent extends to functional equivalents, implying that other people selling Basmati rice could be restricted by the patent. Several attempts have also been made to patent uses, products and processes based on Indian traditional herbal medicines, e.g., turmeric neem. If we are not vigilant and we do not immediately counter these patent applications, other countries/individuals may encash on our rich legacy and we may not be able to do anything about it.

Biopiracy is the term used to refer to the use of bio-resources by multinational companies and other organisations without proper authorisation from the countries and people concerned without compensatory payment.

Most of the industrialised nations are rich financially but poor in biodiversity and traditional knowledge. In contrast the developing and the underdeveloped world is rich in biodiversity and traditional knowledge related to bio-resources. Traditional knowledge related to bio-resources can be exploited to develop modern applications and can also be used to save time, effort and expenditure during their commercialisation.

There has been growing realisation of the injustice, inadequate compensation, and benefit sharing between developed and developing countries. Therefore, some nations are developing laws to prevent such unauthorised exploitation of their bio-resources and traditional knowledge.

The Indian Parliament has recently cleared the second amendment of the Indian Patents Bill, that takes such issues into consideration, including patent terms of emergency provisions, research, and development initiatives.

SUMMARY

Biotechnology has given to humans several useful products by using microbes, plant, animals and their metabolic machinery. Techniques of tissue culture and somatic hybridisation offer vast potential for manipulation of plants *in vitro* to produce new varieties. Recombinant DNA technology has made it possible to engineer microbes, plants and animals such that they have novel capabilities. Genetically Modified Organisms have been created by using methods other than natural methods to transfer one or more genes from one organism to another, generally using techniques such as recombinant DNA technology.

GM plants have been useful in increasing crop yields, reduce post-harvest losses and make crops more tolerant of stresses. There are several GM crop plants with improved nutritional value of foods and reduced the reliance on chemical pesticides (pest-resistant crops).

Recombinant DNA technological processes have made immense impact in the area of healthcare by enabling mass production of safe and more effective therapeutics. Since the recombinant therapeutics are identical to human proteins, they do not induce unwanted immunological responses and are free from risk of infection as was observed in case of similar products isolated from non-human sources. Human insulin is made in bacteria yet its structure is absolutely identical to that of the natural molecule.

Transgenic animals are also used to understand how genes contribute to the development of a disease by serving as models for human diseases, such as cancer, cystic fibrosis, rheumatoid arthritis and Alzheimer's.

Gene therapy is the insertion of genes into an individual's cells and tissues to treat diseases especially hereditary diseases. It does so by replacing a defective mutant allele with a functional one or gene targeting which involves gene amplification. Viruses that attack their hosts and introduce their genetic material into the host cell as part of their replication cycle are used as vectors to transfer healthy genes or more recently portions of genes.

The current interest in the manipulation of microbes, plants, and animals has raised serious ethical questions.

EXERCISES

1. Which part of the plant is best suited for making virus-free plants and why?
2. What is the major advantage of producing plants by micropropagation?
3. Find out what the various components of the medium used for propagation of an explant *in vitro* are?
4. Crystals of Bt toxin produced by some bacteria do not kill the bacteria themselves because –

   (a) bacteria are resistant to the toxin

(b) toxin is immature;

(c) toxin is inactive;

(d) bacteria encloses toxin in a special sac.

5. What are transgenic bacteria? Illustrate using any one example.
6. Compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of production of genetically modified crops.
7. What are Cry proteins? Name an organism that produce it. How has man exploited this protein to his benefit?
8. What is gene therapy? Illustrate using the example of adenosine deaminase (ADA) deficiency.
9. Digrammatically represent the experimental steps in cloning and expressing an human gene (say the gene for growth hormone) into a bacterium like *E. coli*?
10. Can you suggest a method to remove oil (hydrocarbon) from seeds based on your understanding of rDNA technology and chemistry of oil?
11. Find out from internet what is golden rice.
12. Does our blood have proteases and nucleases?
13. Consult internet and find out how to make orally active protein pharmaceutical. What is the major problem to be encountered?

UNIT X

ECOLOGY

Chapter 11
Organisms and Populations

Chapter 12
Ecosystem

Chapter 13
Biodiversity and Conservation

Diversity is not only a characteristic of living organisms but also of content in biology textbooks. Biology is presented either as botany, zoology and microbiology or as classical and modern. The latter is a euphemism for molecular aspects of biology. Luckily we have many threads which weave the different areas of biological information into a unifying principle. Ecology is one such thread which gives us a holistic perspective to biology. The essence of biological understanding is to know how organisms, while remaining an individual, interact with other organisms and physical habitats as a group and hence behave like organised wholes, i.e., population, community, ecosystem or even as the whole biosphere. Ecology explains to us all this. A particular aspect of this is the study of anthropogenic environmental degradation and the socio-political issues it has raised. This unit describes as well as takes a critical view of the above aspects.

RAMDEO MISRA
(1908-1998)

Ramdeo Misra is revered as the Father of Ecology in India. Born on 26 August 1908, Ramdeo Misra obtained Ph.D in Ecology (1937) under Prof. W. H. Pearsall, FRS, from Leeds University in UK. He established teaching and research in ecology at the Department of Botany of the Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. His research laid the foundations for understanding of tropical communities and their succession, environmental responses of plant populations and productivity and nutrient cycling in tropical forest and grassland ecosystems. Misra formulated the first postgraduate course in ecology in India. Over 50 scholars obtained Ph. D degree under his supervision and moved on to other universities and research institutes to initiate ecology teaching and research across the country.

He was honoured with the Fellowships of the Indian National Science Academy and World Academy of Arts and Science, and the prestigious Sanjay Gandhi Award in Environment and Ecology. Due to his efforts, the Government of India established the National Committee for Environmental Planning and Coordination (1972) which, in later years, paved the way for the establishment of the Ministry of Environment and Forests (1984).

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CHAPTER 11

ORGANISMS AND POPULATIONS

11.1 Populations

Our living world is fascinatingly diverse and amazingly complex. We can try to understand its complexity by investigating processes at various levels of biological organisation–macromolecules, cells, tissues, organs, individual organisms, population, communities, ecosystems and biomes. At any level of biological organisation we can ask two types of questions – for example, when we hear the bulbul singing early morning in the garden, we may ask – 'How does the bird sing?' Or, 'Why does the bird sing ?' The 'how-type' questions seek the *mechanism* behind the process while the 'why-type' questions seek the *significance* of the process. For the first question in our example, the answer might be in terms of the operation of the voice box and the vibrating bone in the bird, whereas for the second question the answer may lie in the bird's need to communicate with its mate during breeding season. When you observe nature around you with a scientific frame of mind you will certainly come up with many interesting questions of both types - *Why are night-blooming flowers generally white? How does the bee know which flower has nectar? Why does cactus have so many thorns? How does the chick spures recognise her own mother*?, and so on.

You have already learnt in previous classes that Ecology is a subject which studies the interactions among organisms and between the organism and its physical (abiotic) environment.

Ecology is basically concerned with four levels of biological organisation – organisms, populations, communities and biomes. In this chapter we explore ecology at population levels.

11.1 POPULATIONS

11.1.1 Population Attributes

In nature, we rarely find isolated, single individuals of any species; majority of them live in groups in a well defined geographical area, share or compete for similar resources, potentially interbreed and thus constitute a population. Although the term interbreeding implies sexual reproduction, a group of individuals resulting from even asexual reproduction is also generally considered a population for the purpose of ecological studies. All the cormorants in a wetland, rats in an abandoned dwelling, teakwood trees in a forest tract, bacteria in a culture plate and lotus plants in a pond, are some examples of a population. In earlier chapters you have learnt that although an individual organism is the one that has to cope with a changed environment, it is at the population level that natural selection operates to evolve the desired traits. Population ecology is, therefore, an important area because it links ecology to population genetics and evolution.

A population has certain attributes whereas, an individual organism does not. An individual may have births and deaths, but a population has *birth rates* and *death rates*. In a population these rates refer to *per capita* births and deaths. The rates, hence, expressed are change in numbers (increase or decrease) with respect to members of the population. Here is an example. If in a pond there were 20 lotus plants last year and through reproduction 8 new plants are added, taking the current population to 28, we calculate the birth rate as 8/20 = 0.4 offspring per lotus per year. If 4 individuals in a laboratory population of 40 fruitflies died during a specified time interval, say a week, the death rate in the population during that period is 4/40 = 0.1 individuals per fruitfly per week.

Another attribute characteristic of a population is *sex ratio*. An individual is either a male or a female but a population has a sex ratio (e.g., 60 per cent of the population are females and 40 per cent males).

A population at any given time is composed of individuals of different ages. If the age distribution (per cent individuals of a given age or age group) is plotted for the population, the resulting structure is called an age pyramid (Figure 11.1). For human population, the age pyramids generally show age distribution of males and females in a diagram. The shape of the pyramids reflects the growth status of the population - (a) whether it is growing, (b) stable or (c) declining.

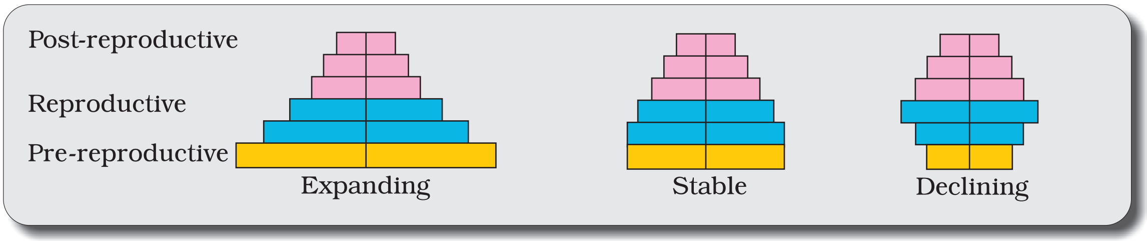

Figure 11.1 Representation of age pyramids for human population

The size of the population tells us a lot about its status in the habitat. Whatever ecological processes we wish to investigate in a population, be it the outcome of competition with another species, the impact of a predator or the effect of a pesticide application, we always evaluate them in terms of any change in the population size. The size, in nature, could be as low as <10 (Siberian cranes at Bharatpur wetlands in any year) or go into millions (*Chlamydomonas* in a pond). Population size, technically called **population density** (designated as N), need not necessarily be measured in numbers only. Although total number is generally the most appropriate measure of population density, it is in some cases either meaningless or difficult to determine. In an area, if there are 200 carrot grass (*Parthenium hysterophorus*) plants but only a single huge banyan tree with a large canopy, stating that the population density of banyan is low relative to that of carrot grass amounts to underestimating the enormous role of the Banyan in that community. In such cases, the per cent cover or biomass is a more meaningful measure of the population size. Total number is again not an easily adoptable measure if the population is huge and counting is impossible or very time-consuming. *If you have a dense laboratory culture of bacteria in a petri dish what is the best measure to report its density?* Sometimes, for certain ecological investigations, there is no need to know the absolute population densities; relative densities serve the purpose equally well. For instance, the number of fish caught per trap is good enough measure of its total population density in the lake. We are mostly obliged to estimate population sizes indirectly, without actually counting them or seeing them. The tiger census in our national parks and tiger reserves is often based on pug marks and fecal pellets.

11.1.2 Population Growth

The size of a population for any species is not a static parameter. It keeps changing with time, depending on various factors including food availability, predation pressure and adverse weather. In fact, it is these changes in population density that give us some idea of what is happening to the population – whether it is flourishing or declining. Whatever might be the ultimate reasons, the density of a population in a given habitat during a given period, fluctuates due to changes in four basic processes, two of which (natality and immigration) contribute to an increase in population density and two (mortality and emigration) to a decrease.

(i) ***Natality*** refers to the number of births during a given period in the population that are added to the initial density.

(ii) ***Mortality*** is the number of deaths in the population during a given period.

(iii) ***Immigration*** is the number of individuals of the same species that have come into the habitat from elsewhere during the time period under consideration.

(iv) ***Emigration*** is the number of individuals of the population who left the habitat and gone elsewhere during the time period under consideration.

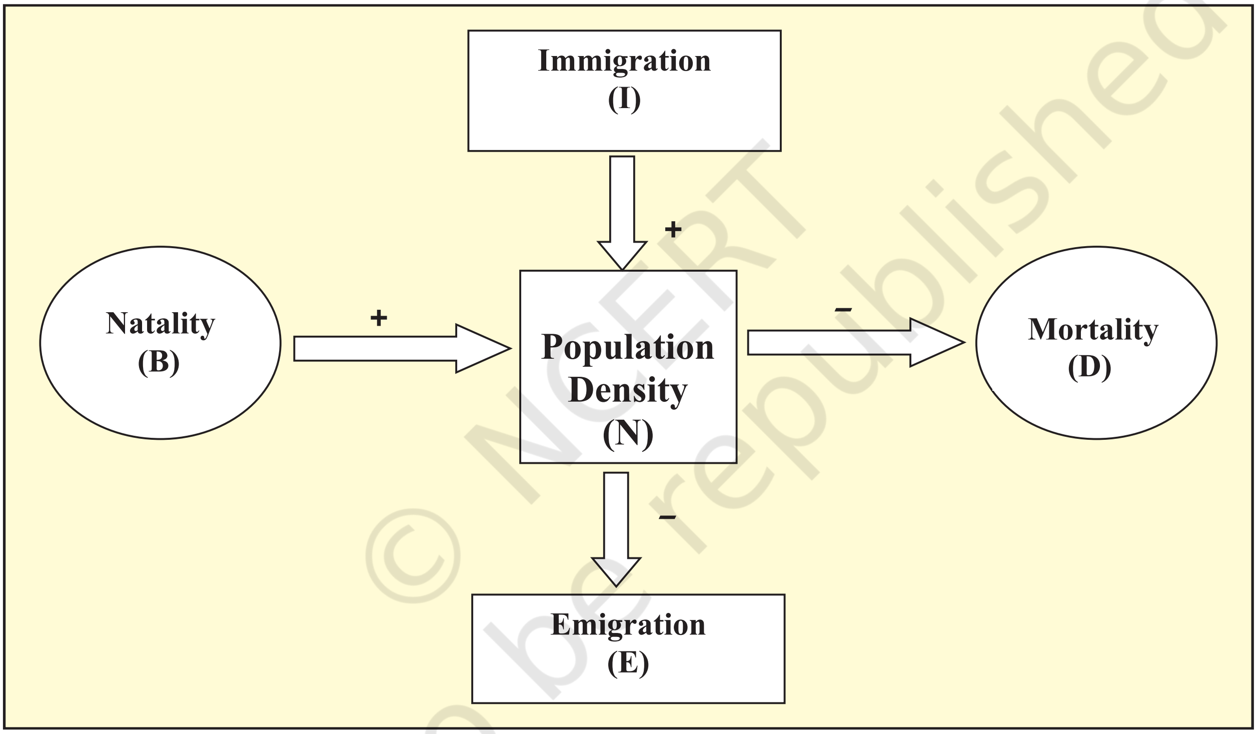

Figure 11.2

So, if N is the population density at time t, then its density at time t +1 is

$$N_{t+1} = N_t + [(B + I) - (D + E)]$$

You can see from the above equation (Fig. 11.2) that population density will increase if the number of births plus the number of immigrants (B + I) is more than the number of deaths plus the number of emigrants (D + E). Under normal conditions, births and deaths are the most important factors influencing population density, the other two factors assuming importance only under special conditions. For instance, if a new habitat is just being colonised, immigration may contribute more significantly to population growth than birth rates.

Growth Models : Does the growth of a population with time show any specific and predictable pattern? We have been concerned about unbridled human population growth and problems created by it in our country and it is therefore natural for us to be curious if different animal populations in nature behave the same way or show some restraints on growth. Perhaps we can learn a lesson or two from nature on how to control population growth.

(i) ***Exponential growth:*** Resource (food and space) availability is obviously essential for the unimpeded growth of a population. Ideally, when resources in the habitat are unlimited, each species has the ability to realise fully its innate potential to grow in number, as Darwin observed while developing his theory of natural selection. Then the population grows in an exponential or geometric fashion. If in a population of size N, the birth rates (not total number but *per capita* births) are represented as *b* and death rates (again, *per capita* death rates) as *d*, then the increase or decrease in N during a unit time period t (dN/dt) will be

$$dN/dt = (b - d) \times N$$

Let $(b-d) = r$, then

$$dN/dt = rN$$

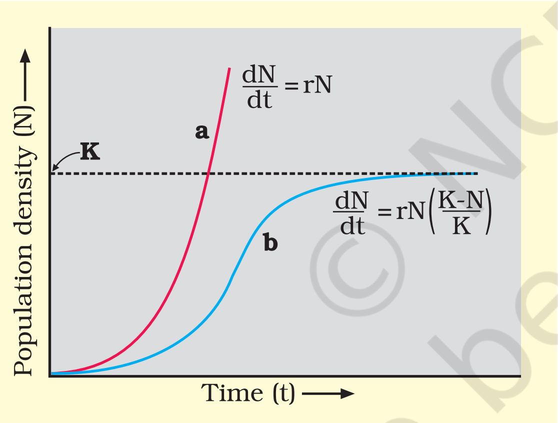

Figure 11.3 Population growth curve
a when responses are not limiting the growth, plot is exponential,
b when responses are limiting the growth, plot is logistic,
K is carrying capacity

The r in this equation is called the 'intrinsic rate of natural increase' and is a very important parameter chosen for assessing impacts of any biotic or abiotic factor on population growth.

To give you some idea about the magnitude of r values, for the Norway rat the r is 0.015, and for the flour beetle it is 0.12. In 1981, the r value for human population in India was 0.0205. *Find out what the current r value is. For calculating it, you need to know the birth rates and death rates.*

The above equation describes the exponential or geometric growth pattern of a population (Figure 11.3) and results in a J-shaped curve when we plot N in relation to time. If you are familiar with basic calculus, you can derive the integral form of the exponential growth equation as

$$N_t = N_0 e^{rt}$$

where

N_t = Population density after time t
N_0 = Population density at time zero
r = intrinsic rate of natural increase
e = the base of natural logarithms (2.71828)

Any species growing exponentially under unlimited resource conditions can reach enormous population densities in a short time.

Darwin showed how even a slow growing animal like elephant could reach enormous numbers in the absence of checks. The following is an anecdote popularly narrated to demonstrate dramatically how fast a huge population could build up when growing exponentially.

The king and the minister sat for a chess game. The king, confident of winning the game, was ready to accept any bet proposed by the minister. The minister humbly said that if he won, he wanted only some wheat grains, the quantity of which is to be calculated by placing on the chess board one grain in Square 1, then two in Square 2, then four in Square 3, and eight in Square 4, and so on, doubling each time the previous quantity of wheat on the next square until all the 64 squares were filled. The king accepted the seemingly silly bet and started the game, but unluckily for him, the minister won. The king felt that fulfilling the minister's bet was so easy. He started with a single grain on the first square and proceeded to fill the other squares following minister's suggested procedure, but by the time he covered half the chess board, the king realised to his dismay that all the wheat produced in his entire kingdom pooled together would still be inadequate to cover all the 64 squares. Now think of a tiny Paramecium starting with just one individual and through binary fission, doubling in numbers every day, and imagine what a mind-boggling population size it would reach in 64 days. (provided food and space remain unlimited)

(ii) ***Logistic growth:*** No population of any species in nature has at its disposal unlimited resources to permit exponential growth. This leads to competition between individuals for limited resources. Eventually, the 'fittest' individual will survive and reproduce. The governments of many countries have also realised this fact and introduced various restraints with a view to limit human population growth. In nature, a given habitat has enough resources to support a maximum possible number, beyond which no further growth is possible. Let us call this limit as nature's *carrying capacity* (K) for that species in that habitat.

A population growing in a habitat with limited resources show initially a lag phase, followed by phases of acceleration and deceleration and finally an asymptote, when the population density reaches the carrying capacity. A plot of N in relation to time (t) results in a sigmoid curve. This type of population growth is called *Verhulst-Pearl Logistic Growth* (Figure 11.3) and is described by the following equation:

$$dN/dt = rN\left(\frac{K-N}{K}\right)$$

Where N = Population density at time t
r = Intrinsic rate of natural increase
K = Carrying capacity

Since resources for growth for most animal populations are finite and become limiting sooner or later, the logistic growth model is considered a more realistic one.

Gather from Government Census data the population figures for India for the last 100 years, plot them and check which growth pattern is evident.

11.1.3 Life History Variation

Populations evolve to maximise their reproductive fitness, also called Darwinian fitness (high r value), in the habitat in which they live. Under a particular set of selection pressures, organisms evolve towards the most efficient reproductive strategy. Some organisms breed only once in their lifetime (Pacific salmon fish, bamboo) while others breed many times during their lifetime (most birds and mammals). Some produce a large number of small-sized offspring (Oysters, pelagic fishes) while others produce a small number of large-sized offspring (birds, mammals). So, which is desirable for maximising fitness? Ecologists suggest that life history traits of organisms have evolved in relation to the constraints imposed by the abiotic and biotic components of the habitat in which they live. Evolution of life history traits in different species is currently an important area of research being conducted by ecologists.

11.1.4 Population Interactions

Can you think of any natural habitat on earth that is inhabited just by a single species? There is no such habitat and such a situation is even inconceivable. For any species, the minimal requirement is one more species on which it can feed. Even a plant species, which makes its own food, cannot survive alone; it needs soil microbes to break down the organic matter in soil and return the inorganic nutrients for absorption. And then, how will the plant manage pollination without an animal agent? It is obvious that in nature, animals, plants and microbes do not and cannot live in isolation but interact in various ways to form a biological community. Even in minimal communities, many interactive linkages exist, although all may not be readily apparent.

Interspecific interactions arise from the interaction of populations of two different species. They could be beneficial, detrimental or neutral (neither harm nor benefit) to one of the species or both. Assigning a **'+'** sign for beneficial interaction, **'-'** sign for detrimental and 0 for neutral interaction, let us look at all the possible outcomes of interspecific interactions (Table11.1).

Table 11.1 : Population Interactions

Species A	Species B	Name of Interaction
+	+	*Mutualism*
–	–	*Competition*
+	–	*Predation*
+	–	*Parasitism*
+	0	*Commensalism*
–	0	*Amensalism*

Both the species benefit in ***mutualism*** and both lose in ***competition*** in their interactions with each other. In both ***parasitism*** and ***predation*** only one species benefits (parasite and predator, respectively) and the interaction is detrimental to the other species (host and prey, respectively). The interaction where one species is benefitted and the other is neither benefitted nor harmed is called **commensalism**. In **amensalism** on the other hand one species is harmed whereas the other is unaffected. Predation, parasitism and commensalism share a common characteristic– the interacting species live closely together.

(i) ***Predation****: What would happen to all the energy fixed by autotrophic organisms if the community has no animals to eat the plants*? You can think of predation as nature's way of transferring to higher trophic levels the energy fixed by plants. When we think of predator and prey, most probably it is the tiger and the deer that readily come to our mind, but a sparrow eating any seed is no less a predator. Although animals eating plants are categorised separately as *herbivores*, they are, in a broad ecological context, not very different from predators.

Besides acting as 'conduits' for energy transfer across trophic levels, predators play other important roles. They keep prey populations under control. But for predators, prey species could achieve very high population densities and cause ecosystem instability. When certain exotic species are introduced into a geographical area, they become invasive and start spreading fast because the invaded land does not have its natural predators. The prickly pear cactus introduced into Australia in the early 1920's caused havoc by spreading rapidly into millions of hectares of rangeland. Finally, the invasive cactus was brought under control only after a cactus-feeding predator (a moth) from its natural habitat was introduced into the country. *Biological control* methods adopted in agricultural pest control are based on the ability of the predator to regulate prey population. Predators also help in maintaining species diversity in a community, by reducing the intensity of competition among competing prey species. In the rocky intertidal communities of the American Pacific Coast the starfish *Pisaster* is an important predator. In a field experiment, when all the starfish were removed from an enclosed intertidal area, more than 10 species of invertebrates became extinct within a year, because of inter-specific competition.

If a predator is too efficient and overexploits its prey, then the prey might become extinct and following it, the predator will also become extinct for lack of food. This is the reason why predators in nature are 'prudent'. Prey species have evolved various defenses to lessen the impact of predation. Some species of insects and frogs are cryptically-coloured (*camouflaged*) to avoid being detected easily by the predator. Some are poisonous and therefore avoided by the predators. The Monarch butterfly is highly distasteful to its predator (bird) because of a special chemical present in its body. Interestingly, the butterfly acquires this chemical during its caterpillar stage by feeding on a poisonous weed.

For plants, herbivores are the predators. Nearly 25 per cent of all insects are known to be *phytophagous* (feeding on plant sap and other parts of plants). The problem is particularly severe for plants because, unlike animals, they cannot run away from their predators. Plants therefore have evolved an astonishing variety of morphological and chemical defences against herbivores. Thorns (*Acacia*, *Cactus*) are the most common morphological means of defence. Many plants produce and store chemicals that make the herbivore sick when they are eaten, inhibit feeding or digestion, disrupt its reproduction or even kill it. You must have seen the weed *Calotropis* growing in abandoned fields. The plant produces highly poisonous cardiac glycosides and that is why you never see any cattle or goats browsing on this plant. A wide variety of chemical substances that we extract from plants on a commercial scale (nicotine, caffeine, quinine, strychnine, opium, etc.,) are produced by them actually as defences against grazers and browsers.

(ii) ***Competition:*** When Darwin spoke of the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest in nature, he was convinced that interspecific competition is a potent force in organic evolution. It is generally believed that competition occurs when closely related species compete for the same resources that are limiting, but this is not entirely true. Firstly, totally unrelated species could also compete for the same resource. For instance, in some shallow South American lakes, visiting flamingoes and resident fishes compete for their common food, the zooplankton in the lake. Secondly, resources need not be limiting for competition to occur; in interference competition, the feeding efficiency of one species might be reduced due to the interfering and inhibitory presence of the other species, even if resources (food and space) are abundant. Therefore, competition is best defined as a process in which the fitness of one species (measured in terms of its 'r' the intrinsic rate of increase) is significantly lower in the presence of another species. It is relatively easy to demonstrate in laboratory experiments, as Gause and other experimental ecologists did, when resources are limited the competitively superior species will eventually eliminate the other species, but evidence for such competitive exclusion occurring in nature is not always conclusive. Strong and persuasive circumstantial evidence does exist however in some cases. The Abingdon tortoise in Galapagos Islands became extinct within a decade after goats were introduced on the island, apparently due to the greater browsing efficiency of the goats. Another evidence for the occurrence of competition in nature comes from what is called 'competitive release'. A species whose distribution is restricted to a small geographical area because of the presence of a competitively superior species, is found to expand its distributional range dramatically when the competing species is experimentally removed. Connell's elegant field experiments showed that on the rocky sea coasts of Scotland, the larger and competitively superior barnacle *Balanus* dominates the intertidal area, and excludes the smaller barnacle *Chathamalus* from that zone. In general, herbivores and plants appear to be more adversely affected by competition than carnivores.

Gause's '*Competitive Exclusion Principle*' states that two closely related species competing for the same resources cannot co-exist indefinitely and the competitively inferior one will be eliminated eventually. This may be true if resources are limiting, but not otherwise. More recent studies do not support such gross generalisations about competition. While they do not rule out the occurrence of interspecific competition in nature, they point out that species facing competition might evolve mechanisms that promote co-existence rather than exclusion. One such mechanism is 'resource partitioning'. If two species compete for the same resource, they could avoid competition by choosing, for instance, different times for feeding or different foraging patterns. MacArthur showed that five closely related species of warblers living on the same tree were able to avoid competition and co-exist due to behavioural differences in their foraging activities.

(iii) ***Parasitism**:* Considering that the parasitic mode of life ensures free lodging and meals, it is not surprising that parasitism has evolved in so many taxonomic groups from plants to higher vertebrates. Many parasites have evolved to be host-specific (they can parasitise only a single species of host) in such a way that both host and the parasite tend to co-evolve; that is, if the host evolves special mechanisms for rejecting or resisting the parasite, the parasite has to evolve mechanisms to counteract and neutralise them, in order to be successful with the same host species. In accordance with their life styles, parasites evolved special adaptations such as the loss of unnecessary sense organs, presence of adhesive organs or suckers to cling on to the host, loss of digestive system and high reproductive capacity. The life cycles of parasites are often complex, involving one or two intermediate hosts or vectors to facilitate parasitisation of its primary host. The human liver fluke (a trematode parasite) depends on two intermediate hosts (a snail and a fish) to complete its life cycle. The malarial parasite needs a vector (mosquito) to spread to other hosts. Majority of the parasites harm the host; they may reduce the survival, growth and reproduction of the host and reduce its population density. They might render the host more vulnerable to predation by making it physically weak. *Do you believe that an ideal parasite should be able to thrive within the host without harming it? Then why didn't natural selection lead to the evolution of such totally harmless parasites*?

Parasites that feed on the external surface of the host organism are called *ectoparasites*. The most familiar examples of this group are the lice on humans and ticks on dogs. Many marine fish are infested with ectoparasitic copepods. *Cuscuta*, a parasitic plant that is commonly found growing on hedge plants, has lost its chlorophyll and leaves in the course of evolution. It derives its nutrition from the host plant which it parasitises. The female mosquito is not considered a parasite, although it needs our blood for reproduction. *Can you explain why?*

In contrast, *endoparasites* are those that live inside the host body at different sites (liver, kidney, lungs, red blood cells, etc.). The life cycles of endoparasites are more complex because of their extreme specialisation. Their morphological and anatomical features are greatly simplified while emphasising their reproductive potential.

Brood parasitism in birds is a fascinating example of parasitism in which the parasitic bird lays its eggs in the nest of its host and lets the host incubate them. During the course of evolution, the eggs of the parasitic bird have evolved to resemble the host's egg in size and colour to reduce the chances of the host bird detecting the foreign eggs and ejecting them from the nest. Try to follow the movements of the cuckoo (koel) and the crow in your neighborhood park during the breeding season (spring to summer) and watch brood parasitism in action.

(iv) ***Commensalism****:* This is the interaction in which one species benefits and the other is neither harmed nor benefited. An orchid growing as an *epiphyte* on a mango branch, and barnacles growing on the back of a whale benefit while neither the mango tree nor the whale derives any apparent benefit. The cattle egret and grazing cattle in close association, a sight you are most likely to catch if you live in farmed rural areas, is a classic example of commensalism. The egrets always forage close to where the cattle are grazing because the cattle, as they move, stir up and flush out insects from the vegetation that otherwise might be difficult for the egrets to find and catch. Another example of commensalism is the interaction between sea anemone that has stinging tentacles and the clown fish that lives among them. The fish gets protection from predators which stay away from the stinging tentacles. The anemone does not appear to derive any benefit by hosting the clown fish.

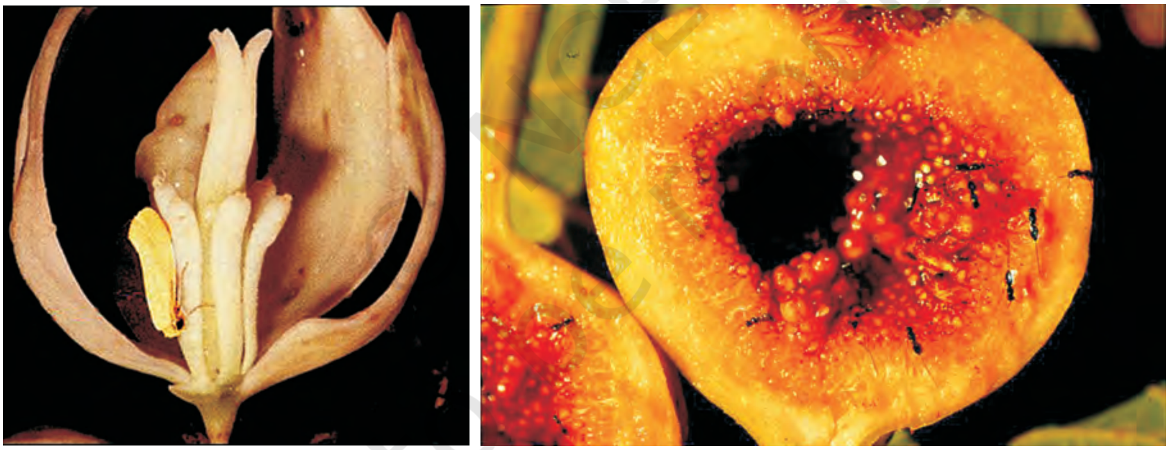
(a) (b)

Figure 11.4 Mutual relationship between fig tree and wasp: (a) Fig flower is pollinated by wasp; (b) Wasp laying eggs in a fig fruit

(v) ***Mutualism****:* This interaction confers benefits on both the interacting species. Lichens represent an intimate mutualistic relationship between a fungus and photosynthesising algae or cyanobacteria. Similarly, the *mycorrhizae* are associations between fungi and the roots of higher plants. The fungi help the plant in the absorption of essential nutrients from the soil while the plant in turn provides the fungi with energy-yielding carbohydrates.

The most spectacular and evolutionarily fascinating examples of mutualism are found in plant-animal relationships. Plants need the help of animals for pollinating their flowers and dispersing their seeds. Animals obviously have to be paid 'fees' for the services that plants expect from them. Plants offer rewards or fees in the form of pollen and nectar for pollinators and juicy and nutritious fruits for seed dispersers. But the mutually beneficial system should also be safeguarded against 'cheaters', for example, animals that try to steal nectar without aiding in pollination. Now you can see why plant-animal interactions often involve *co-evolution* of the mutualists, that is, the evolutions of the flower and its pollinator species are tightly linked with one another. In many species of fig trees, there is a tight one-to-one relationship with the pollinator species of wasp (Figure 11.4). It means that a given fig species can be pollinated only by its 'partner' wasp species and no other species. The female wasp uses the fruit not only as an oviposition (egg-laying) site but uses the developing seeds within the fruit for nourishing its larvae. The wasp pollinates the fig inflorescence while searching for suitable egg-laying sites. In return for the favour of pollination the fig offers the wasp some of its developing seeds, as food for the developing wasp larvae.

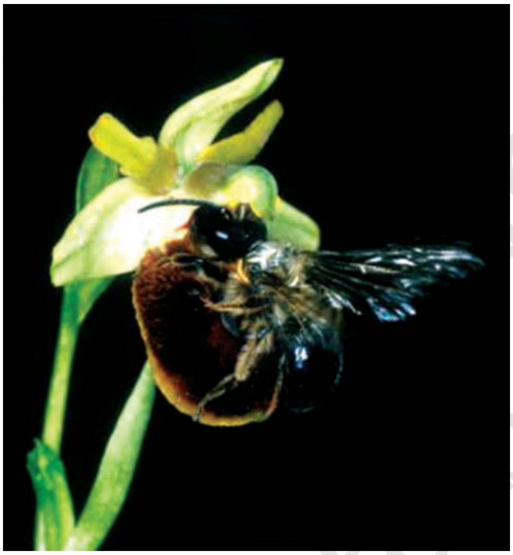

Figure 11.5 Showing bee-a pollinator on orchid flower

Orchids show a bewildering diversity of floral patterns many of which have evolved to attract the right pollinator insect (bees and bumblebees) and ensure guaranteed pollination by it (Figure 11.5). Not all orchids offer rewards. The Mediterranean orchid *Ophrys* employs 'sexual deceit' to get pollination done by a species of bee. One petal of its flower bears an uncanny resemblance to the female of the bee in size, colour and markings. The male bee is attracted to what it perceives as a female, 'pseudocopulates' with the flower, and during that process is dusted with pollen from the flower. When this same bee 'pseudocopulates' with another flower, it transfers pollen to it and thus, pollinates the flower. Here you can see how co-evolution operates. If the female bee's colour patterns change even slightly for any reason during evolution, pollination success will be reduced unless the orchid flower co-evolves to maintain the resemblance of its petal to the female bee.

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SUMMARY

As a branch of biology, Ecology is the study of the relationships of living organisms with the abiotic (physico-chemical factors) and biotic components (other species) of their environment. It is concerned with four levels of biological organisation-organisms, populations, communities and biomes.

Evolutionary changes through natural selection take place at the population level and hence, population ecology is an important area of ecology. A population is a group of individuals of a given species sharing or competing for similar resources in a defined geographical area. Populations have attributes that individual organisms do not- birth rates and death rates, sex ratio and age distribution. The proportion of different age groups of males and females in a population is often presented graphically as age pyramid; its shape indicates whether a population is stationary, growing or declining.

Ecological effects of any factors on a population are generally reflected in its size (population density), which may be expressed in different ways (numbers, biomass, per cent cover, etc.,) depending on the species.

Populations grow through births and immigration and decline through deaths and emigration. When resources are unlimited, the growth is usually exponential but when resources become progressively limiting, the growth pattern turns logistic. In either case, growth is ultimately limited by the carrying capacity of the environment. The intrinsic rate of natural increase (r) is a measure of the inherent potential of a population to grow.

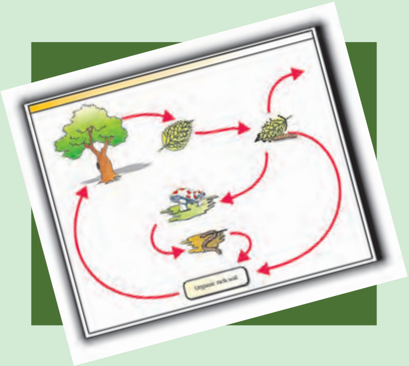
In nature populations of different species in a habitat do not live in isolation but interact in many ways. Depending on the outcome, these interactions between two species are classified as competition (both species suffer), predation and parasitism (one benefits and the other suffers), commensalism (one benefits and the other is unaffected), amensalism (one is harmed, other unaffected) and mutualism (both species benefit). Predation is a very important process through which trophic energy transfer is facilitated and some predators help in controlling their prey populations. Plants have evolved diverse morphological and chemical defenses against herbivory. In competition, it is presumed that the superior competitor eliminates the inferior one (the Competitive Exclusion Principle), but many closely related species have evolved various mechanisms which facilitate their co-existence. Some of the most fascinating cases of mutualism in nature are seen in plant-pollinator interactions.

EXERCISES

1. List the attributes that populations possess but not individuals.
2. If a population growing exponentially double in size in 3 years, what is the intrinsic rate of increase (r) of the population?
3. Name important defence mechanisms in plants against herbivory.
4. An orchid plant is growing on the branch of mango tree. How do you describe this interaction between the orchid and the mango tree?
5. What is the ecological principle behind the biological control method of managing with pest insects?
6. Define population and community.
7. Define the following terms and give one example for each:
   (a) Commensalism
   (b) Parasitism
   (c) Camouflage
   (d) Mutualism
   (e) Interspecific competition
8. With the help of suitable diagram describe the logistic population growth curve.
9. Select the statement which explains best parasitism.
   (a) One organism is benefited.
   (b) Both the organisms are benefited.
   (c) One organism is benefited, other is not affected.
   (d) One organism is benefited, other is affected.
10. List any three important characteristics of a population and explain.

CHAPTER 12

ECOSYSTEM



12.1 Ecosystem–Structure and Function

12.2. Productivity

12.3 Decomposition

12.4 Energy Flow

12.5 Ecological Pyramids

An ecosystem can be visualised as a functional unit of nature, where living organisms interact among themselves and also with the surrounding physical environment. Ecosystem varies greatly in size from a small pond to a large forest or a sea. Many ecologists regard the entire biosphere as a global ecosystem, as a composite of all local ecosystems on Earth. Since this system is too much big and complex to be studied at one time, it is convenient to divide it into two basic categories, namely **terrestrial** and **aquatic**. Forest, grassland and desert are some examples of terrestrial ecosystems; pond, lake, wetland, river and estuary are some examples of aquatic ecosystems. Crop fields and an aquarium may also be considered as man-made ecosystems.

We will first look at the structure of the ecosystem, in order to appreciate the input (productivity), transfer of energy (food chain/web, nutrient cycling) and the output (degradation and energy loss). We will also look at the relationships – cycles, chains, webs – that are created as a result of these energy flows within the system and their inter-relationship.

12.1 ECOSYSTEM – STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

In earlier classes, you have looked at the various components of the environment- abiotic and biotic. You studied how the individual biotic and abiotic factors affected each other and their surrounding. Let us look at these components in a more integrated manner and see how the flow of energy takes place within these components of the ecosystem.

Interaction of biotic and abiotic components result in a physical structure that is characteristic for each type of ecosystem. Identification and enumeration of plant and animal species of an ecosystem gives its species composition. Vertical distribution of different species occupying different levels is called **stratification**. For example, trees occupy top vertical strata or layer of a forest, shrubs the second and herbs and grasses occupy the bottom layers.

The components of the ecosystem are seen to function as a unit when you consider the following aspects:

(i) Productivity;
(ii) Decomposition;
(iii) Energy flow; and
(iv) Nutrient cycling.

To understand the ethos of an aquatic ecosystem let us take a small pond as an example. This is fairly a self-sustainable unit and rather simple example that explain even the complex interactions that exist in an aquatic ecosystem. A pond is a shallow water body in which all the above mentioned four basic components of an ecosystem are well exhibited. The abiotic component is the water with all the dissolved inorganic and organic substances and the rich soil deposit at the bottom of the pond. The solar input, the cycle of temperature, day-length and other climatic conditions regulate the rate of function of the entire pond. The autotrophic components include the phytoplankton, some algae and the floating, submerged and marginal plants found at the edges. The consumers are represented by the zooplankton, the free swimming and bottom dwelling forms. The decomposers are the fungi, bacteria and flagellates especially abundant in the bottom of the pond. This system performs all the functions of any ecosystem and of the biosphere as a whole, i.e., conversion of inorganic into organic material with the help of the radiant energy of the sun by the autotrophs; consumption of the autotrophs by heterotrophs; decomposition and mineralisation of the dead matter to release them back for reuse by the autotrophs, these event are repeated over and over again. There is unidirectional movement of energy towards the higher trophic levels and its dissipation and loss as heat to the environment.

12.2 PRODUCTIVITY

A constant input of solar energy is the basic requirement for any ecosystem to function and sustain. **Primary production** is defined as the amount of biomass or organic matter produced per unit area over a time period by plants during photosynthesis. It is expressed in terms of weight ($g\,m^{-2}$) or energy ($kcal\ m^{-2}$). The rate of biomass production is called **productivity**. It is expressed in terms of $g\,m^{-2}\ yr^{-1}$ or $(kcal\ m^{-2})\ yr^{-1}$ to compare the productivity of different ecosystems. It can be divided into gross primary productivity (GPP) and net primary productivity (NPP). **Gross primary productivity** of an ecosystem is the rate of production of organic matter during photosynthesis. A considerable amount of GPP is utilised by plants in respiration. Gross primary productivity minus respiration losses (R), is the **net primary productivity** (NPP).

$$\text{GPP} - \text{R} = \text{NPP}$$

Net primary productivity is the available biomass for the consumption to heterotrophs (herbiviores and decomposers). **Secondary productivity** is defined as the rate of formation of new organic matter by consumers.

Primary productivity depends on the plant species inhabiting a particular area. It also depends on a variety of environmental factors, availability of nutrients and photosynthetic capacity of plants. Therefore, it varies in different types of ecosystems. The annual net primary productivity of the whole biosphere is approximately 170 billion tons (dry weight) of organic matter. Of this, despite occupying about 70 per cent of the surface, the productivity of the oceans are only 55 billion tons. Rest of course, is on land. *Discuss the main reason for the low productivity of ocean with your teacher.*

12.3 DECOMPOSITION

You may have heard of the earthworm being referred to as the farmer's 'friend'. This is so because they help in the breakdown of complex organic matter as well as in loosening of the soil. Similarly, decomposers break down complex organic matter into inorganic substances like carbon dioxide, water and nutrients and the process is called **decomposition**. Dead plant remains such as leaves, bark, flowers and dead remains of animals, including fecal matter, constitute **detritus**, which is the raw material for decomposition. The important steps in the process of decomposition are fragmentation, leaching, catabolism, humification and mineralisation.

Detritivores (e.g., earthworm) break down detritus into smaller particles. This process is called **fragmentation.** By the process of **leaching,** water-soluble inorganic nutrients go down into the soil horizon and get precipitated as unavailable salts. Bacterial and fungal enzymes degrade detritus into simpler inorganic substances. This process is called as **catabolism**.

It is important to note that all the above steps in decomposition operate simultaneously on the detritus (Figure 12.1). Humification and mineralisation occur during decomposition in the soil. **Humification** leads

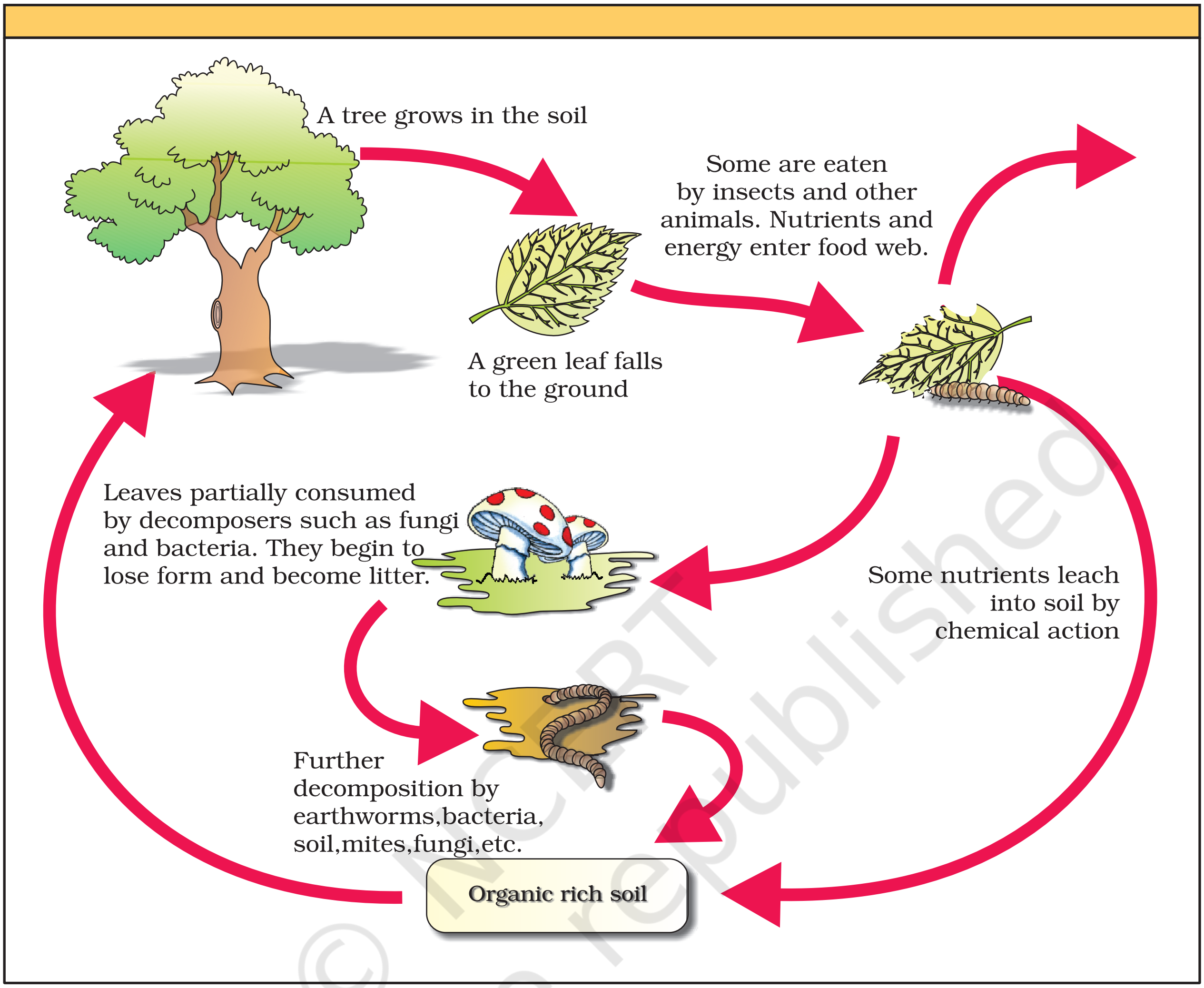

A tree grows in the soil
A green leaf falls to the ground
Some are eaten by insects and other animals. Nutrients and energy enter food web.
Leaves partially consumed by decomposers such as fungi and bacteria. They begin to lose form and become litter.
Some nutrients leach into soil by chemical action
Further decomposition by earthworms,bacteria, soil,mites,fungi,etc.
Organic rich soil

Figure 12.1 Diagrammatic representation of decomposition cycle in a terrestrial ecosystem

to accumulation of a dark coloured amorphous substance called **humus** that is highly resistant to microbial action and undergoes decomposition at an extremely slow rate. Being colloidal in nature it serves as a reservoir of nutrients. The humus is further degraded by some microbes and release of inorganic nutrients occur by the process known as **mineralisation**.

Decomposition is largely an oxygen-requiring process. The rate of decomposition is controlled by chemical composition of detritus and climatic factors. In a particular climatic condition, decomposition rate is slower if detritus is rich in lignin and chitin, and quicker, if detritus is rich in nitrogen and water-soluble substances like sugars. Temperature and soil moisture are the most important climatic factors that regulate decomposition through their effects on the activities of soil microbes. Warm and moist environment favour decomposition whereas low temperature and anaerobiosis inhibit decomposition resulting in build up of organic materials.

12.4 Energy Flow

Except for the deep sea hydro-thermal ecosystem, sun is the only source of energy for all ecosystems on Earth. Of the incident solar radiation less than 50 per cent of it is **photosynthetically active radiation** (PAR). We know that plants and photosynthetic bacteria (autotrophs), fix Sun's radiant energy to make food from simple inorganic materials. Plants capture only 2-10 per cent of the PAR and this small amount of energy sustains the entire living world. So, it is very important to know how the solar energy captured by plants flows through different organisms of an ecosystem. All organisms are dependent for their food on producers, either directly or indirectly. So you find unidirectional flow of energy from the sun to producers and then to consumers. *Is this in keeping with the first law of thermodynamics?*

Further, ecosystems are not exempt from the Second Law of thermodynamics. They need a constant supply of energy to synthesise the molecules they require, to counteract the universal tendency toward increasing disorderliness.

The green plant in the ecosystem are called **producers**. In a terrestrial ecosystem, major producers are herbaceous and woody plants. Likewise, producers in an aquatic ecosystem are various species like phytoplankton, algae and higher plants.

You have read about the food chains and webs that exist in nature. Starting from the plants (or producers) food chains or rather webs are formed such that an animal feeds on a plant or on another animal and in turn is food for another. The chain or web is formed because of this interdependency. No energy that is trapped into an organism remains in it for ever. The energy trapped by the producer, hence, is either passed on to a consumer or the organism dies. Death of organism is the beginning of the detritus food chain/web.

All animals depend on plants (directly or indirectly) for their food needs. They are hence called **consumers** and also heterotrophs. If they feed on the producers, the plants, they are called primary consumers, and if the animals eat other animals which in turn eat the plants (or their produce) they are called secondary consumers. Likewise, you could have tertiary consumers too. Obviously the primary consumers will be **herbivores**. Some common herbivores are insects, birds and mammals in terrestrial ecosystem and molluscs in aquatic ecosystem.

The consumers that feed on these herbivores are carnivores, or more correctly **primary carnivores** (though secondary consumers). Those animals that depend on the primary carnivores for food are labelled **secondary carnivores.** A simple grazing food chain (GFC) is depicted below:

Grass - - - - - → Goat - - - - - → Man - - - - - →
(Producer) (Primary Consumer) (Secondary consumer)

The **detritus food chain** (DFC) begins with dead organic matter. It is made up of **decomposers** which are heterotrophic organisms, mainly fungi and bacteria. They meet their energy and nutrient requirements by degrading dead organic matter or detritus. These are also known as **saprotrophs** (*sapro:* to decompose). Decomposers secrete digestive enzymes that breakdown dead and waste materials into simple, inorganic materials, which are subsequently absorbed by them.

In an aquatic ecosystem, GFC is the major conduit for energy flow. As against this, in a terrestrial ecosystem, a much larger fraction of energy flows through the detritus food chain than through the GFC. Detritus food chain may be connected with the grazing food chain at some levels: some of the organisms of DFC are prey to the GFC animals, and in a natural ecosystem, some animals like cockroaches, crows, etc., are omnivores. These natural interconnection of food chains make it a **food web**. *How would you classify human beings!*

Organisms occupy a place in the natural surroundings or in a community according to their feeding relationship with other organisms. Based on the source of their nutrition or food, organisms occupy a specific place in the food chain that is known as their **trophic level**. Producers belong to the first trophic level, herbivores (primary consumer) to the second and carnivores (secondary consumer) to the third (Figure 12.2).

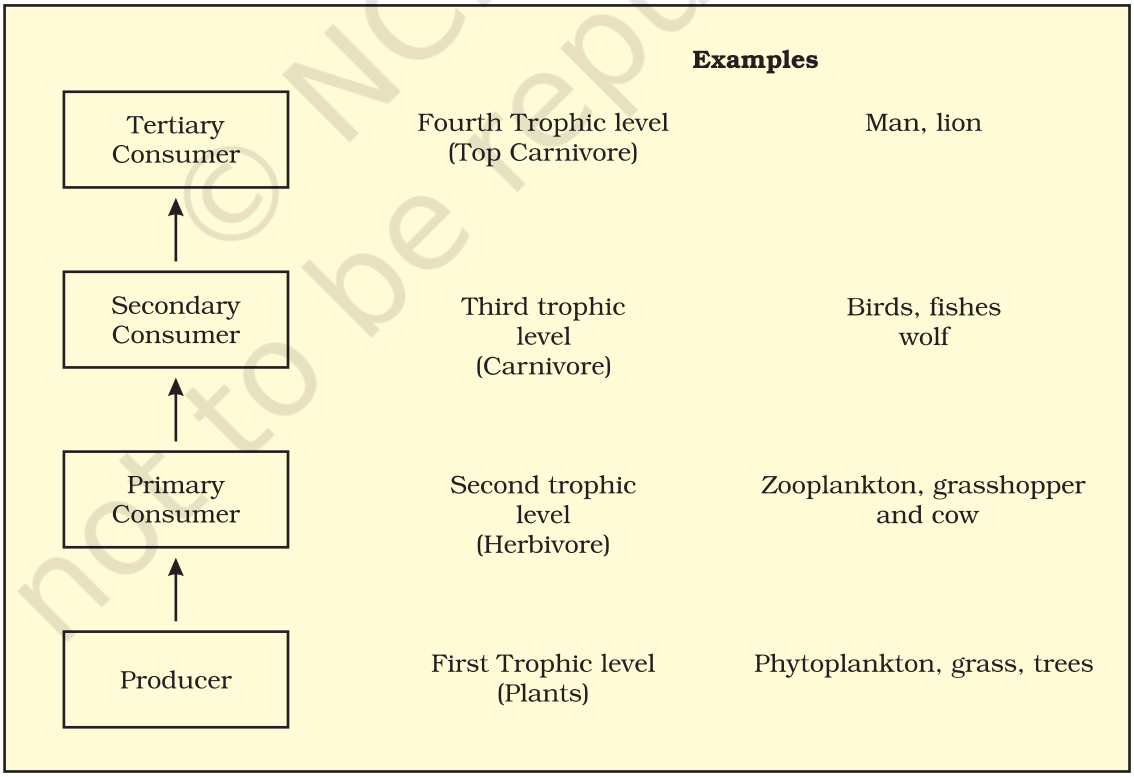

Examples
Tertiary Consumer
Fourth Trophic level (Top Carnivore)
Man, lion
Secondary Consumer
Third trophic level (Carnivore)
Birds, fishes wolf
Primary Consumer
Second trophic level (Herbivore)
Zooplankton, grasshopper and cow
Producer
First Trophic level (Plants)
Phytoplankton, grass, trees

Figure 12.2 Diagrammatic representation of trophic levels in an ecosystem

The important point to note is that the amount of energy decreases at successive trophic levels. When any organism dies it is converted to detritus or dead biomass that serves as an energy source for decomposers. Organisms at each trophic level depend on those at the lower trophic level for their energy demands.

Each trophic level has a certain mass of living material at a particular time called as the **standing crop**. The standing crop is measured as the mass of living organisms **(biomass)** or the number in a unit area. The biomass of a species is expressed in terms of fresh or dry weight. Measurement of biomass in terms of dry weight is more accurate. *Why?*

The number of trophic levels in the grazing food chain is restricted as the transfer of energy follows 10 per cent law – only 10 per cent of the energy is transferred to each trophic level from the lower trophic level. In nature, it is possible to have so many levels – producer, herbivore, primary carnivore, secondary carnivore in the grazing food chain (Figure 12.3) . *Do you think there is any such limitation in a detritus food chain?*

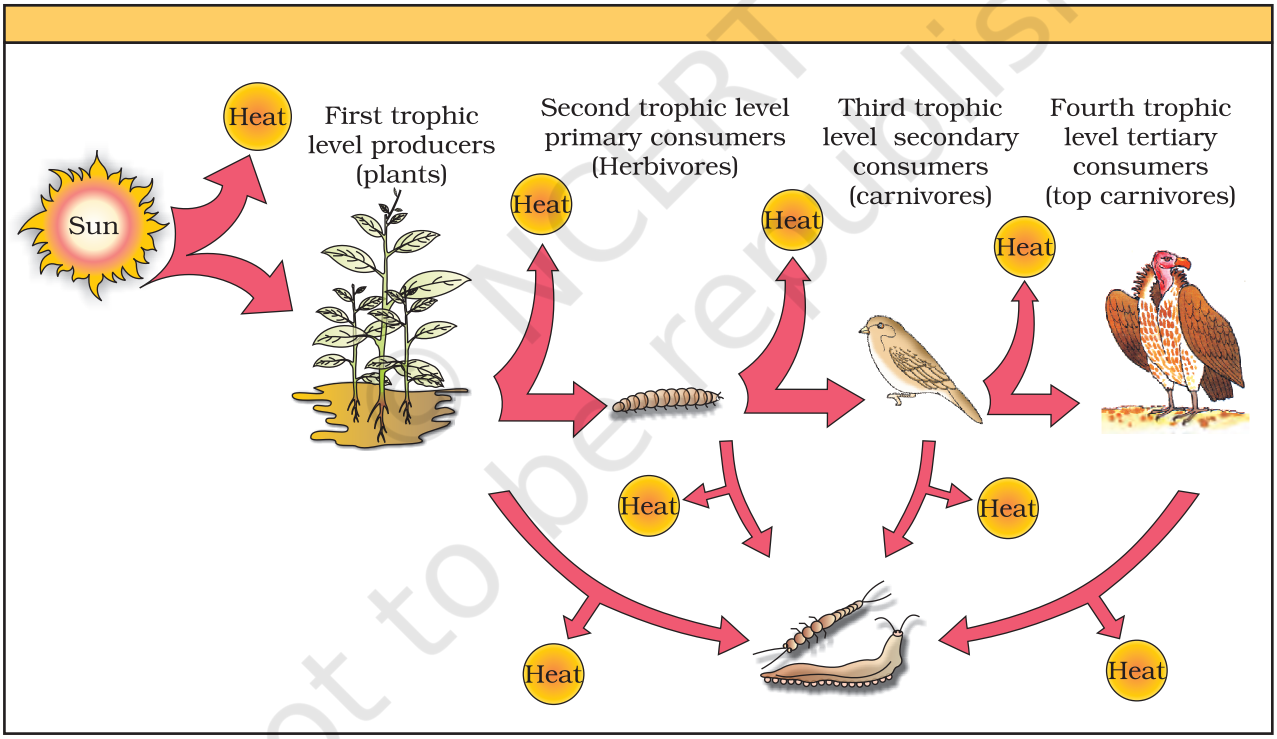

Heat
Sun
First trophic level producers (plants)
Second trophic level primary consumers (Herbivores)
Third trophic level secondary consumers (carnivores)
Fourth trophic level tertiary consumers (top carnivores)
Heat
Heat
Heat
Heat
Heat
Heat
Heat

Figure 12.3 Energy flow through different trophic levels

12.5 ECOLOGICAL PYRAMIDS

You must be familiar with the shape of a pyramid. The base of a pyramid is broad and it narrows towards the apex. One gets a similar shape, whether you express the food or energy relationship between organisms at different trophic levels. This, relationship is expressed in terms of number, biomass or energy. The base of each pyramid represents the producers or the first trophic level while the apex represents tertiary or top level consumer. The three types of ecological pyramids that are usually studied are (a) pyramid of number; (b) pyramid of biomass and (c) pyramid of energy. For detail (see Figure 12.4 a, b, c and d).

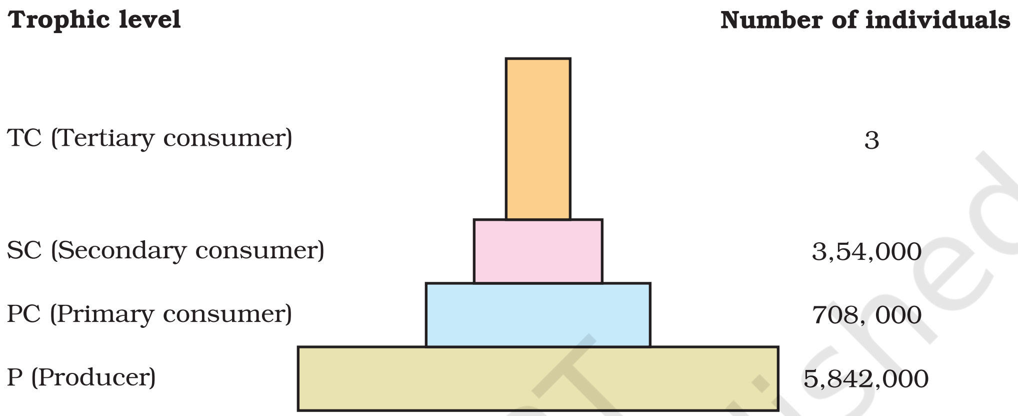


Figure 12.4 (a) Pyramid of numbers in a grassland ecosystem. Only three top-carnivores are supported in an ecosystem based on production of nearly 6 millions plants

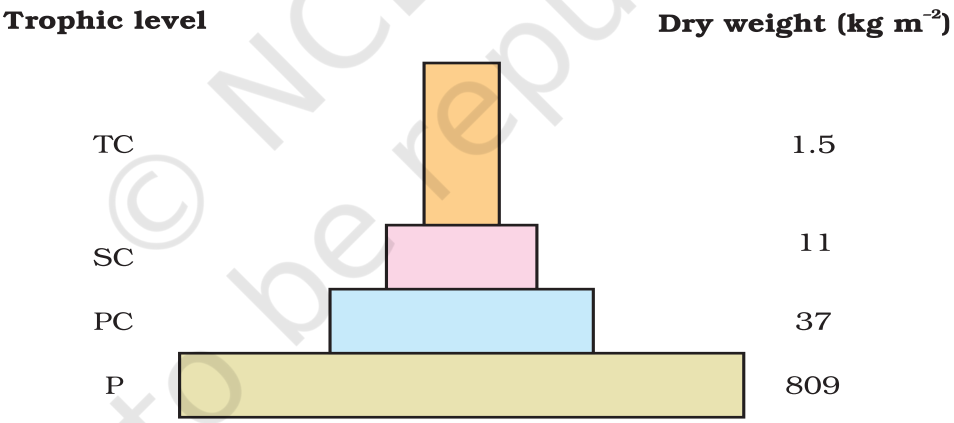


Figure 12.4 (b) Pyramid of biomass shows a sharp decrease in biomass at higher trophic levels

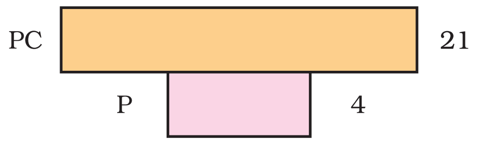


Figure 12.4 (c) Inverted pyramid of biomass-small standing crop of phytoplankton supports large standing crop of zooplankton

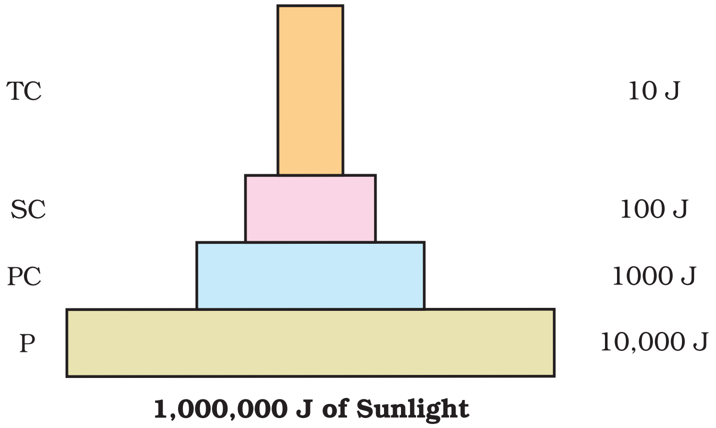


Figure 12.4 (d) An ideal pyramid of energy. Observe that primary producers convert only 1% of the energy in the sunlight available to them into NPP

Any calculations of energy content, biomass or numbers, has to include all organisms at that trophic level. No generalisations we make will be true if we take only a few individuals at any trophic level into account. Also a given organism may occupy more than one trophic level simultaneously. One must remember that the trophic level represents a functional level, not a species as such. A given species may occupy more than one trophic level in the same ecosystem at the same time; for example, a sparrow is a primary consumer when it eats seeds, fruits, peas, and a secondary consumer when it eats insects and worms. *Can you work out how many trophic levels human beings function at in a food chain?*

In most ecosystems, all the pyramids, of number, of energy and biomass are upright, i.e., producers are more in number and biomass than the herbivores, and herbivores are more in number and biomass than the carnivores. Also energy at a lower trophic level is always more than at a higher level.

There are exceptions to this generalisation: If you were to count the number of insects feeding on a big tree what kind of pyramid would you get? Now add an estimate of the number of small birds depending on the insects, as also the number of larger birds eating the smaller. Draw the shape you would get.

The pyramid of biomass in sea is generally inverted because the biomass of fishes far exceeds that of phytoplankton. *Isn't that a paradox? How would you explain this?*

Pyramid of energy is always upright, can never be inverted, because when energy flows from a particular trophic level to the next trophic level, some energy is always lost as heat at each step. Each bar in the energy pyramid indicates the amount of energy present at each trophic level in a given time or annually per unit area.

However, there are certain limitations of ecological pyramids such as it does not take into account the same species belonging to two or more trophic levels. It assumes a simple food chain, something that almost never exists in nature; it does not accommodate a food web. Moreover, saprophytes are not given any place in ecological pyramids even though they play a vital role in the ecosystem.

SUMMARY

An ecosystem is a structural and functional unit of nature and it comprises abiotic and biotic components. Abiotic components are inorganic materials- air, water and soil, whereas biotic components are producers, consumers and decomposers. Each ecosystem has characteristic physical structure resulting from interaction amongst abiotic and biotic components. Species composition and stratification are the two main structural features of an ecosystem. Based on source of nutrition every organism occupies a place in an ecosystem.

Productivity, decomposition, energy flow, and nutrient cycling are the four important components of an ecosystem. Primary productivity is the rate of capture of solar energy or biomass production of the producers. It is divided into two types: gross primary productivity (GPP) and net primary productivity (NPP). Rate of capture of solar energy or total production of organic matter is called as GPP. NPP is the remaining biomass or the energy left after utilisation of producers. Secondary productivity is the rate of assimilation of food energy by the consumers. In decomposition, complex organic compounds of detritus are converted to carbon dioxide, water and inorganic nutrients by the decomposers. Decomposition involves three processes, namely fragmentation of detritus, leaching and catabolism.

Energy flow is unidirectional. First, plants capture solar energy and then, food is transferred from the producers to decomposers. Organisms of different trophic levels in nature are connected to each other for food or energy relationship forming a food chain. The storage and movement of nutrient elements through the various components of the ecosystem is called nutrient cycling; nutrients are repeatedly used through this process. Nutrient cycling is of two types—gaseous and sedimentary. Atmosphere or hydrosphere is the reservoir for the gaseous type of cycle (carbon), whereas Earth's crust is the reservoir for sedimentary type (phosphorus). Products of ecosystem processes are named as ecosystem services, e.g., purification of air and water by forests.

EXERCISES

1. Fill in the blanks.
   (a) Plants are called as________because they fix carbon dioxide.
   (b) In an ecosystem dominated by trees, the pyramid (of numbers) is_________type.

- (c) In aquatic ecosystems, the limiting factor for the productivity is_________.
- (d) Common detritivores in our ecosystem are________.
- (e) The major reservoir of carbon on earth is________.

2. Which one of the following has the largest population in a food chain?
   - (a) Producers
   - (b) Primary consumers
   - (c) Secondary consumers
   - (d) Decomposers
3. The second trophic level in a lake is
   - (a) Phytoplankton
   - (b) Zooplankton
   - (c) Benthos
   - (d) Fishes
4. Secondary producers are
   - (a) Herbivores
   - (b) Producers
   - (c) Carnivores
   - (d) None of the above
5. What is the percentage of photosynthetically active radiation (PAR) in the incident solar radiation?
   - (a) 100%
   - (b) 50 %
   - (c) 1-5%
   - (d) 2-10%
6. Distinguish between
   - (a) Grazing food chain and detritus food chain
   - (b) Production and decomposition
   - (c) Upright and inverted pyramid
   - (d) Food chain and Food web
   - (e) Litter and detritus
   - (f) Primary and secondary productivity
7. Describe the components of an ecosystem.
8. Define ecological pyramids and describe with examples, pyramids of number and biomass.
9. What is primary productivity? Give brief description of factors that affect primary productivity.
10. Define decomposition and describe the processes and products of decomposition.
11. Give an account of energy flow in an ecosystem.

12083CH15

Invertebrates
Vertebrates
Plants

CHAPTER 13

BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION

13.1 Biodiversity

13.2 Biodiversity Conservation

If an alien from a distant galaxy were to visit our planet Earth, the first thing that would amaze and baffle him would most probably be the enormous diversity of life that he would encounter. Even for humans, the rich variety of living organisms with which they share this planet never ceases to astonish and fascinate us. The common man would find it hard to believe that there are more than 20,000 species of ants, 3,00,000 species of beetles, 28,000 species of fishes and nearly 20,000 species of orchids. Ecologists and evolutionary biologists have been trying to understand the significance of such diversity by asking important questions– *Why are there so many species? Did such great diversity exist throughout earth's history? How did this diversification come about? How and why is this diversity important to the biosphere? Would it function any differently if the diversity was much less? How do humans benefit from the diversity of life?*

13.1 BIODIVERSITY

In our biosphere immense diversity (or heterogeneity) exists not only at the species level but at all levels of biological organisation ranging from macromolecules within cells to biomes. Biodiversity is the term popularised by the sociobiologist Edward Wilson to describe the

combined diversity at all the levels of biological organisation.
The most important of them are–

(i) ***Genetic diversity***: A single species might show high diversity at the genetic level over its distributional range. The genetic variation shown by the medicinal plant *Rauwolfia vomitoria* growing in different Himalayan ranges might be in terms of the potency and concentration of the active chemical (reserpine) that the plant produces. India has more than 50,000 genetically different strains of rice, and 1,000 varieties of mango.

(ii) ***Species diversity***: The diversity at the species level, for example, the Western Ghats have a greater amphibian species diversity than the Eastern Ghats.

(iii) ***Ecological diversity***: At the ecosystem level, India, for instance, with its deserts, rain forests, mangroves, coral reefs, wetlands, estuaries, and alpine meadows has a greater ecosystem diversity than a Scandinavian country like Norway.

It has taken millions of years of evolution, to accumulate this rich diversity in nature, but we could lose all that wealth in less than two centuries if the present rates of species losses continue. Biodiversity and its conservation are now vital environmental issues of international concern as more and more people around the world begin to realise the critical importance of biodiversity for our survival and well- being on this planet.

13.1.1 How Many Species are there on Earth and How Many in India?

Since there are published records of all the species discovered and named, we know how many species in all have been recorded so far, but it is not easy to answer the question of how many species there are on earth. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) (2004), the total number of plant and animal species described so far is slightly more than 1.5 million, but we have no clear idea of how many species are yet to be discovered and described. Estimates vary widely and many of them are only educated guesses. For many taxonomic groups, species inventories are more complete in temperate than in tropical countries. Considering that an overwhelmingly large proportion of the species waiting to be discovered are in the tropics, biologists make a statistical comparison of the temperate-tropical species richness of an exhaustively studied group of insects and extrapolate this ratio to other groups of animals and plants to come up with a gross estimate of the total number of species on earth. Some extreme estimates range from 20 to 50 million, but a more conservative and scientifically sound estimate made by Robert May places the global species diversity at about 7 million.

Let us look at some interesting aspects about earth's biodiversity based on the currently available species inventories. More than 70 per cent of all the species recorded are animals, while plants (including algae, fungi, bryophytes, gymnosperms and angiosperms) comprise no more than 22 per cent of the total. Among animals, insects are the most species-rich taxonomic group, making up more than 70 per cent of the total. That means, out of every 10 animals on this planet, 7 are insects. Again, how do we explain this enormous diversification of insects? The number of fungi species in the world is more than the combined total of the species of fishes, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. In Figure 13.1, biodiversity is depicted showing species number of major taxa.

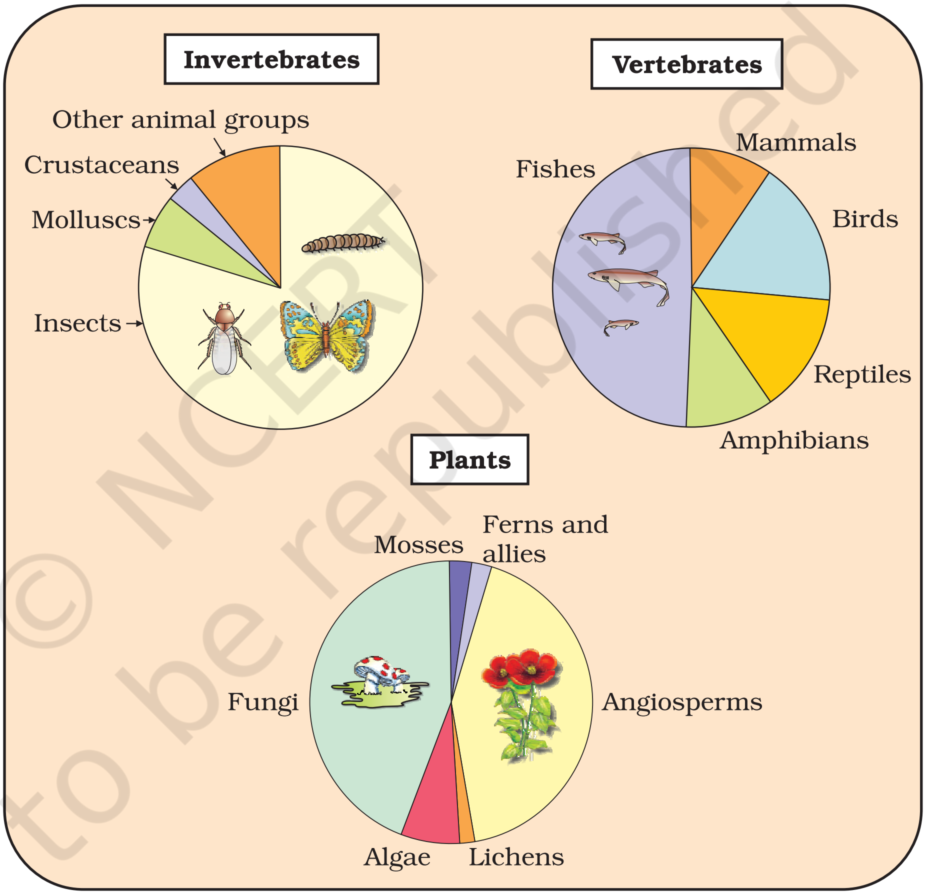


Figure 13.1 Representing global biodiversity: proportionate number of species of major taxa of plants, invertebrates and vertebrates

It should be noted that these estimates do not give any figures for prokaryotes. Biologists are not sure about how many prokaryotic species there might be. The problem is that conventional taxonomic methods are not suitable for identifying microbial species and many species are simply not culturable under laboratory conditions. If we accept biochemical or molecular criteria for delineating species for this group, then their diversity alone might run into millions.

Although India has only 2.4 per cent of the world's land area, its share of the global species diversity is an impressive 8.1 per cent. That is what makes our country one of the 12 mega diversity countries of the world. Nearly 45,000 species of plants and twice as many of animals have been recorded from India. How many living species are actually there waiting to be discovered and named? If we accept May's global estimates, only 22 per cent of the total species have been recorded so far. Applying this proportion to India's diversity figures, we estimate that there are probably more than 1,00,000 plant species and more than 3,00,000 animal species yet to be discovered and described. Would we ever be able to complete the inventory of the biological wealth of our country? Consider the immense trained manpower (taxonomists) and the time required to complete the job. The situation appears more hopeless when we realise that a large fraction of these species faces the threat of becoming extinct even before we discover them. Nature's biological library is burning even before we catalogued the titles of all the books stocked there.

13.1.2 Patterns of Biodiversity

(i) ***Latitudinal gradients***: The diversity of plants and animals is not uniform throughout the world but shows a rather uneven distribution. For many group of animals or plants, there are interesting patterns in diversity, the most well- known being the latitudinal gradient in diversity. In general, species diversity decreases as we move away from the equator towards the poles. With very few exceptions, tropics (latitudinal range of 23.5° N to 23.5° S) harbour more species than temperate or polar areas. Colombia located near the equator has nearly 1,400 species of birds while New York at 41° N has 105 species and Greenland at 71° N only 56 species. India, with much of its land area in the tropical latitudes, has more than 1,200 species of birds. A forest in a tropical region like Equador has up to 10 times as many species of vascular plants as a forest of equal area in a temperate region like the Midwest of the USA. The largely tropical Amazonian rain forest in South America has the greatest biodiversity on earth- it is home to more than 40,000 species of plants, 3,000 of fishes, 1,300 of birds, 427 of mammals, 427 of amphibians, 378 of reptiles and of more than 1,25,000 invertebrates. Scientists estimate that in these rain forests there might be at least two million insect species waiting to be discovered and named.

What is so special about tropics that might account for their greater biological diversity? Ecologists and evolutionary biologists have proposed various hypotheses; some important ones are (a) Speciation is generally a function of time, unlike temperate regions subjected to frequent glaciations in the past, tropical latitudes have remained relatively undisturbed for millions of years and thus, had a long evolutionary time for species diversification, (b) Tropical environments, unlike temperate ones, are less seasonal, relatively more constant and predictable. Such constant environments promote niche specialisation and lead to a greater species diversity and (c) There is more solar energy available in the tropics, which contributes to higher productivity; this in turn might contribute indirectly to greater diversity.

(ii) ***Species-Area relationships*** *:* During his pioneering and extensive explorations in the wilderness of South American jungles, the great German naturalist and geographer Alexander von Humboldt observed that within a region species richness increased with increasing explored area, but only up to a limit. In fact, the relation between species richness and area for a wide variety of taxa (angiosperm plants, birds, bats, freshwater fishes) turns out to be a rectangular hyperbola (Figure 13.2). On a logarithmic scale, the relationship is a straight line described by the equation

$$\log S = \log C + Z \log A$$

where

S= Species richness A= Area

Z = slope of the line (regression coefficient)

C = Y-intercept

Ecologists have discovered that the value of Z lies in the range of 0.1 to 0.2, regardless of the taxonomic group or the region (whether it is the plants in Britain, birds in California or molluscs in New York state, the slopes of the regression line are amazingly similar). But, if you analyse the species-area relationships among very large areas like the entire continents, you will find that the slope of the line to be much steeper (Z values in the range of 0.6 to 1.2). For example, for frugivorous (fruit-eating) birds and mammals in the tropical forests of different continents, the slope is found to be 1.15. *What do steeper slopes mean in this context?*

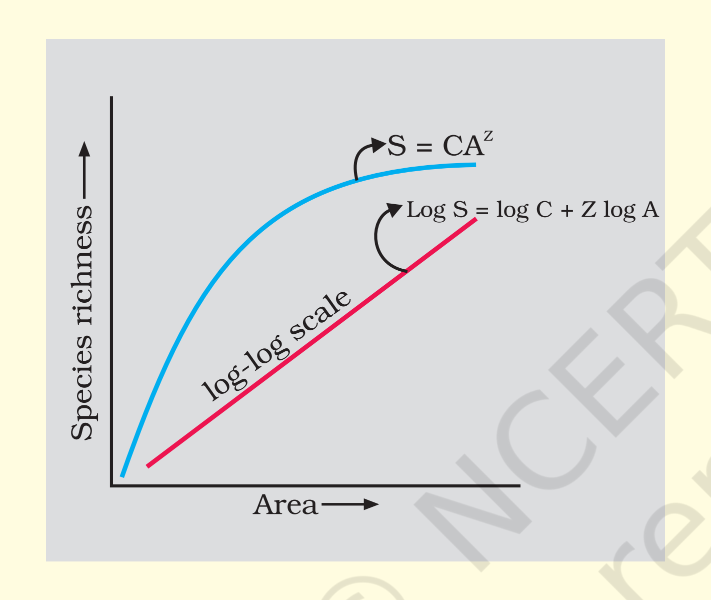


Figure 13.2 Showing species area relationship. Note that on log scale the relationship becomes linear

13.1.3 The importance of Species Diversity to the Ecosystem

Does the number of species in a community really matter to the functioning of the ecosystem? This is a question for which ecologists have not been able to give a definitive answer. For many decades, ecologists believed that communities with more species, generally, tend to be more stable than those with less species. What exactly is stability for a biological community? A stable community should not show too much variation in productivity from year to year; it must be either resistant or resilient to occasional disturbances (natural or man-made), and it must also be resistant to invasions by alien species. We don't know how these attributes are linked to species richness in a community, but David Tilman's long-term ecosystem experiments using outdoor plots provide some tentative answers. Tilman found that plots with more species showed less year-to-year variation in total biomass. He also showed that in his experiments, increased diversity contributed to higher productivity.

Although, we may not understand completely how species richness contributes to the well-being of an ecosystem, we know enough to realise that rich biodiversity is not only essential for ecosystem health but imperative for the very survival of the human race on this planet. At a time when we are losing species at an alarming pace, one might ask– Does it really matter to us if a few species become extinct? Would Western Ghats ecosystems be less functional if one of its tree frog species is lost forever? How is our quality of life affected if, say, instead of 20,000 we have only 15,000 species of ants on earth?

There are no direct answers to such näive questions but we can develop a proper perspective through an analogy (the 'rivet popper hypothesis') used by Stanford ecologist Paul Ehrlich. In an airplane (ecosystem) all parts are joined together using thousands of rivets (species). If every passenger travelling in it starts popping a rivet to take home (causing a species to become extinct), it may not affect flight safety (proper functioning of the ecosystem) initially, but as more and more rivets are removed, the plane becomes dangerously weak over a period of time. Furthermore, which rivet is removed may also be critical. Loss of rivets on the wings (key species that drive major ecosystem functions) is obviously a more serious threat to flight safety than loss of a few rivets on the seats or windows inside the plane.

13.1.4 Loss of Biodiversity

While it is doubtful if any new species are being added (through speciation) into the earth's treasury of species, there is no doubt about their continuing losses. The biological wealth of our planet has been declining rapidly and the accusing finger is clearly pointing to human activities. The colonisation of tropical Pacific Islands by humans is said to have led to the extinction of more than 2,000 species of native birds. The IUCN Red List (2004) documents the extinction of 784 species (including 338 vertebrates, 359 invertebrates and 87 plants) in the last 500 years. Some examples of recent extinctions include the dodo (Mauritius), quagga (Africa), thylacine (Australia), Steller's Sea Cow (Russia) and three subspecies (Bali, Javan, Caspian) of tiger. The last twenty years alone have witnessed the disappearance of 27 species. Careful analysis of records shows that extinctions across taxa are not random; some groups like amphibians appear to be more vulnerable to extinction. Adding to the grim scenario of extinctions is the fact that more than 15,500 species world-wide are facing the threat of extinction. Presently, 12 per cent of all bird species, 23 per cent of all mammal species, 32 per cent of all amphibian species and 31per cent of all gymnosperm species in the world face the threat of extinction.

From a study of the history of life on earth through fossil records, we learn that large-scale loss of species like the one we are currently witnessing have also happened earlier, even before humans appeared on the scene. During the long period (> 3 billion years) since the origin and diversification of life on earth there were five episodes of mass extinction of species. How is the 'Sixth Extinction' presently in progress different from the previous episodes? The difference is in the rates; the current species extinction rates are estimated to be 100 to 1,000 times faster than in the pre-human times and our activities are responsible for the faster rates. Ecologists warn that if the present trends continue, nearly half of all the species on earth might be wiped out within the next 100 years.

In general, loss of biodiversity in a region may lead to (a) decline in plant production, (b) lowered resistance to environmental perturbations such as drought and (c) increased variability in certain ecosystem processes such as plant productivity, water use, and pest and disease cycles.

Causes of biodiversity losses: The accelerated rates of species extinctions that the world is facing now are largely due to human activities. There are four major causes (' The Evil Quartet ' is the sobriquet used to describe them).

(i) ***Habitat loss and fragmentation:*** This is the most important cause driving animals and plants to extinction. The most dramatic examples of habitat loss come from tropical rain forests. Once covering more than 14 per cent of the earth's land surface, these rain forests now cover no more than 6 per cent. They are being destroyed fast. By the time you finish reading this chapter, 1000 more hectares of rain forest would have been lost. The Amazon rain forest (it is so huge that it is called the 'lungs of the planet') harbouring probably millions of species is being cut and cleared for cultivating *soya beans* or for conversion to grasslands for raising beef cattle. Besides total loss, the degradation of many habitats by pollution also threatens the survival of many species. When large habitats are broken up into small fragments due to various human activities, mammals and birds requiring large territories and certain animals with migratory habits are badly affected, leading to population declines.

(ii) ***Over-exploitation:*** Humans have always depended on nature for food and shelter, but when 'need' turns to 'greed', it leads to over-exploitation of natural resources. Many species extinctions in the last 500 years (Steller's sea cow, passenger pigeon) were due to overexploitation by humans. Presently many marine fish populations around the world are over harvested, endangering the continued existence of some commercially important species.

(iii) ***Alien species invasions:*** When alien species are introduced unintentionally or deliberately for whatever purpose, some of them turn invasive, and cause decline or extinction of indigenous species. The Nile perch introduced into Lake Victoria in east Africa led eventually to the extinction of an ecologically unique assemblage of more than 200 species of cichlid fish in the lake. You must be familiar with the environmental damage caused and threat posed to our native species by invasive weed species like carrot grass (*Parthenium*), *Lantana* and water hyacinth (*Eicchornia*). The recent illegal introduction of the African catfish *Clarias gariepinus* for aquaculture purposes is posing a threat to the indigenous catfishes in our rivers.

(iv) ***Co-extinctions:*** When a species becomes extinct, the plant and animal species associated with it in an obligatory way also become extinct. When a host fish species becomes extinct, its unique assemblage of parasites also meets the same fate. Another example is the case of a coevolved plant-pollinator mutualism where extinction of one invariably leads to the extinction of the other.

13.2 BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

13.2.1 Why Should We Conserve Biodiversity?

There are many reasons, some obvious and others not so obvious, but all equally important. They can be grouped into three categories: narrowly utilitarian, broadly utilitarian, and ethical.

The **narrowly utilitarian** arguments for conserving biodiversity are obvious; humans derive countless direct economic benefits from nature-food (cereals, pulses, fruits), firewood, fibre, construction material, industrial products (tannins, lubricants, dyes, resins, perfumes) and products of medicinal importance. More than 25 per cent of the drugs currently sold in the market worldwide are derived from plants and 25,000 species of plants contribute to the traditional medicines used by native peoples around the world. Nobody knows how many more medicinally useful plants there are in tropical rain forests waiting to be explored. With increasing resources put into 'bioprospecting' (exploring molecular, genetic and species-level diversity for products of economic importance), nations endowed with rich biodiversity can expect to reap enormous benefits.

The **broadly utilitarian** argument says that biodiversity plays a major role in many ecosystem services that nature provides. The fastdwindling Amazon forest is estimated to produce, through photosynthesis, 20 per cent of the total oxygen in the earth's atmosphere. Can we put an economic value on this service by nature? You can get some idea by finding out how much your neighborhood hospital spends on a cylinder of oxygen. Pollination (without which plants cannot give us fruits or seeds) is another service, ecosystems provide through pollinators layer – bees, bumblebees, birds and bats. *What will be the costs of accomplishing pollination without help from natural pollinators?* There are other intangible benefits – that we derive from nature–the aesthetic pleasures of walking through thick woods, watching spring flowers in full bloom or waking up to a bulbul's song in the morning. Can we put a price tag on such things?

The **ethical** argument for conserving biodiversity relates to what we owe to millions of plant, animal and microbe species with whom we share this planet. Philosophically or spiritually, we need to realise that every species has an intrinsic value, even if it may not be of current or any economic value to us. We have a moral duty to care for their well-being and pass on our biological legacy in good order to future generations.

13.2.2 How do we conserve Biodiversity?

When we conserve and protect the whole ecosystem, its biodiversity at all levels is protected - we save the entire forest to save the tiger. This approach is called *in situ* (on site) conservation. However, when there are situations where an animal or plant is endangered or threatened (organisms facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future) and needs urgent measures to save it from extinction, *ex situ* (off site) conservation is the desirable approach.

***In situ* conservation–** Faced with the conflict between development and conservation, many nations find it unrealistic and economically not feasible to conserve all their biological wealth. Invariably, the number of species waiting to be saved from extinction far exceeds the conservation resources available. On a global basis, this problem has been addressed by eminent conservationists. They identified for maximum protection certain 'biodiversity hotspots' regions with very high levels of species richness and high degree of **endemism** (that is, species confined to that region and not found anywhere else). Initially 25 biodiversity hotspots were identified but subsequently nine more have been added to the list, bringing the total number of biodiversity hotspots in the world to 34. These hotspots are also regions of accelerated habitat loss. Three of these hotspots – Western Ghats and Sri Lanka, Indo-Burma and Himalaya – cover our country's exceptionally high biodiversity regions. Although all the biodiversity hotspots put together cover less than 2 per cent of the earth's land area, the number of species they collectively harbour is extremely high and strict protection of these hotspots could reduce the ongoing mass extinctions by almost 30 per cent.

In India, ecologically unique and biodiversity-rich regions are legally protected as biosphere reserves, national parks and sanctuaries. India now has 14 biosphere reserves, 90 national parks and 448 wildlife sanctuaries. India has also a history of religious and cultural traditions that emphasised protection of nature. In many cultures, tracts of forest were set aside, and all the trees and wildlife within were venerated and given total protection. Such **sacred groves** are found in Khasi and Jaintia Hills in Meghalaya, Aravalli Hills of Rajasthan, Western Ghat regions of Karnataka and Maharashtra and the Sarguja, Chanda and Bastar areas of Madhya Pradesh. In Meghalaya, the sacred groves are the last refuges for a large number of rare and threatened plants.

***Ex situ* Conservation–** In this approach, threatened animals and plants are taken out from their natural habitat and placed in special setting where they can be protected and given special care. Zoological parks, botanical gardens and wildlife safari parks serve this purpose. There are many animals that have become extinct in the wild but continue to be maintained in zoological parks. In recent years *ex situ* conservation has advanced beyond keeping threatened species in enclosures. Now gametes of threatened species can be preserved in viable and fertile condition for long periods using cryopreservation techniques, eggs can be fertilised *in vitro*, and plants can be propagated using tissue culture methods. Seeds of different genetic strains of commercially important plants can be kept for long periods in seed banks.

Biodiversity knows no political boundaries and its conservation is therefore a collective responsibility of all nations. The historic Convention on Biological Diversity ('The Earth Summit') held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, called upon all nations to take appropriate measures for conservation of biodiversity and sustainable utilisation of its benefits. In a follow-up, the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa, 190 countries pledged their commitment to achieve by 2010, a significant reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss at global, regional and local levels.

SUMMARY

Since life originated on earth nearly 3.8 billion years ago, there had been enormous diversification of life forms on earth. Biodiversity refers to the sum total of diversity that exists at all levels of biological organisation. Of particular importance is the diversity at genetic, species and ecosystem levels and conservation efforts are aimed at protecting diversity at all these levels.

More than 1.5 million species have been recorded in the world, but there might still be nearly 6 million species on earth waiting to be

discovered and named. Of the named species, > 70 per cent are animals, of which 70 per cent are insects. The group Fungi has more species than all the vertebrate species combined. India, with about 45,000 species of plants and twice as many species of animals, is one of the 12 mega diversity countries of the world.

Species diversity on earth is not uniformly distributed but shows interesting patterns. It is generally highest in the tropics and decreases towards the poles. Important explanations for the species richness of the tropics are: Tropics had more evolutionary time; they provide a relatively constant environment and, they receive more solar energy which contributes to greater productivity. Species richness is also function of the area of a region; the species-area relationship is generally a rectangular hyperbolic function.

It is believed that communities with high diversity tend to be less variable, more productive and more resistant to biological invasions. Earth's fossil history reveals incidence of mass extinctions in the past, but the present rates of extinction, largely attributed to human activities, are 100 to 1000 times higher. Nearly 700 species have become extinct in recent times and more than 15,500 species (of which > 650 are from India) currently face the threat of extinction. The causes of high extinction rates at present include habitat (particularly forests) loss and fragmentation, over-exploitation, biological invasions and co-extinctions.

Earth's rich biodiversity is vital for the very survival of mankind. The reasons for conserving biodiversity are narrowly utilitarian, broadly utilitarian and ethical. Besides the direct benefits (food, fibre, firewood, pharmaceuticals, etc.), there are many indirect benefits we receive through ecosystem services such as pollination, pest control, climate moderation and flood control. We also have a moral responsibility to take good care of earth's biodiversity and pass it on in good order to our next generation.

Biodiversity conservation may be *in situ* as well as *ex situ*. In *in situ* conservation, the endangered species are protected in their natural habitat so that the entire ecosystem is protected. Recently, 34 'biodiversity hotspots' in the world have been proposed for intensive conservation efforts. Of these, three (Western Ghats-Sri Lanka, Himalaya and Indo-Burma) cover India's rich biodiversity regions. Our country's *in situ* conservation efforts are reflected in its 14 biosphere reserves, 90 national parks, > 450 wildlife sanctuaries and many sacred groves. *Ex situ* conservation methods include protective maintenance of threatened species in zoological parks and botanical gardens, *in vitro* fertilisation, tissue culture propagation and cryopreservation of gametes.

EXERCISES

1. Name the three important components of biodiversity.
2. How do ecologists estimate the total number of species present in the world?

3. Give three hypotheses for explaining why tropics show greatest levels of species richness.
4. What is the significance of the slope of regression in a species – area relationship?
5. What are the major causes of species losses in a geographical region?
6. How is biodiversity important for ecosystem functioning?
7. What are sacred groves? What is their role in conservation?
8. Among the ecosystem services are control of floods and soil erosion. How is this achieved by the biotic components of the ecosystem?
9. The species diversity of plants (22 per cent) is much less than that of animals (72 per cent). What could be the explanations to how animals achieved greater diversification?
10. Can you think of a situation where we deliberately want to make a species extinct? How would you justify it?

NOTES

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